THE   TIMES

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'We are the very best of friends...we love each other as well very much, and it's great'

Family wedding at Windsor for Prince Edward

By Alan Hamilton

PRINCE EDWARD is determined to have a family wedding rather than a public spectacle when he crowns a five-year courtship by marrying Sophie Rhys-Jones later this year.

The couple, whose engagement was announced by Buckingham Palace yesterday, will marry in the late spring or early summer at St George's Chapel, the spiritual home of the Order of the Garter inside Windsor Castle. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were said to be thrilled at the news of their youngest son's impending marriage to the 33-year old public relations executive.

Miss Rhys-Jones's parents — whose permission the Prince sought as well as that of his own — said at their home near Tunbridge Wells that they were equally delighted by the announcement.

Senior Palace sources insisted privately last night that the decision not to turn his wedding into a major tourist attraction in central London was the Prince's alone, and that he had not faced any pressure from the Queen or Downing Street to arrange a scaled-down ceremony more in keeping with the mood of Blairite Britain.

But sources acknowledged that the 34-year-old Prince was "not unconscious" of changes in public perception of the monarchy since the last first-rank royal wedding: that of the Duke and Duchess of York in Westminster Abbey in 1986.

Posing for photographs in the garden of St James's Palace yesterday, the Prince said he had a particular fondness for Windsor, and that it was "somewhere slightly different". Miss Rhys-Jones, showing off her white gold ring set with heart-shaped diamonds from Asprey Garrard, said she expected a high degree of interest, but that the wedding was essentially a personal matter and a family occasion.

If the ceremony is low-key, it will be so only by comparison with the first marriages of his mother, aunt, brothers and sister; St George's can accommodate more than 800 guests. The Palace said last night that no decision had yet been taken on whether to allow live television coverage of the service.

Officials pointed out last night that Prince Edward, who is seventh in line to the throne, was a much less high-profile figure than the Prince of Wales; he has followed his own career and performed relatively few public engagements. Like most other members of his family, he is not supported by the Civil List.

Genealogists suggested that on his marriage, Prince Edward may be created Duke of Cambridge, although, in line with present-day trends, it may be a lifetime dukedom rather than an hereditary one.

Speculation has surrounded the couple since they first met at a real tennis match in 1993, launching one of the longest unofficial courtships in modern royal history. At the time, the monarchy was at a low point withthe Princess Royal divorced and remarried, the Prince's elder brothers both on their way to divorce.

Prince Edward has been under an enormous obligation not to repeat his siblings' marital mistakes. By comparison with his own lengthy courtship, both the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York virtually rushed into marriage. Although the Princess Royal had a longer and more leisurely courtship with Captain Mark Phillips, that marriage, too, ended in divorce.

Miss Rhys-Jones was adamant yesterday that she and the Prince had not lived together during their long association, but it is a fine definition. A suite of rooms at Buckingham Palace was put at her disposal early in the courtship, and she has used them frequently.

She has also been a regular companion of the Prince at Royal Family gatherings, including the annual summer holiday at Balmoral and the Christmas break at Sandringham, where for several years she has joined the Queen and other members of the family at church on Christmas Day.

The Prince and Miss Rhys-Jones are several years older than the average age for first marriage, and have had ample opportunity to get to know each other well. The Prince has been exceedingly careful in ensuring that he has picked the right partner. A successful union has great potential to restore the monarchy's standing; another failure would be a dangerously damaging blow to public perception of the institution.

He acknowledged as much yesterday when he said: "We are the very best of friends, and that's essential. It also helps that we happen to love each other as well very much, and it's great. We are very happy at the moment, and long may it continue."

The Prince finally proposed to Miss Rhys-Jones shortly before Christmas, putting an end to an agonisingly long wait. Apart from a natural caution engendered by the marital fate of his siblings, he was keen to wait until anniversary mourning for the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, was well past.

Both parties were also anxious to put their professional careers on a sound footing. The Prince has spent several years building up his television company, Ardent Productions, making several documentaries on royal history and therefore well aware of the potential for good or harm for the monarchy's future that lies in his hands. Miss Rhys-Jones is now a partner in a successful London public relations consultancy.

Both said yesterday that they intended to continue working. They plan to live relatively modestly at Bagshot Park, the house in Surrey leased by Prince Edward last year.

Congratulations flowed in as soon as the news became public. A spokesman for the Prime Minister, who was told before he left the Seychelles for an official visit to South Africa, said that both Tony and Cherie Blair were delighted. William Hague and Paddy Ashdown also sent their good wishes, as did Dr George Carey and Cardinal Basil Hume.



COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM HOUSE January 6: It is with the greatest pleasure that The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh announce the betrothal of their beloved son The Prince Edward to Miss Sophie Rhys-Jones, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Rhys-Jones.

The official announcement in *The Times* Court Circular....Page 24

Best friends.............Page 3
Discreet charm.............Page 4
Spotless dukedom.......Page 5
James Brown.............Page 22



CHRIS HARRIS

Sophie Rhys-Jones and Prince Edward announcing their long-awaited engagement yesterday after a five-year courtship

Blair speaks up for Brown

Tony Blair tried to halt feuding between rival teams at 10 and 11 Downing Street with a declaration of support for Gordon Brown, saying: "We will always work as a team. This partnership is built to last".........Page 2

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Flu crisis at hospitals dents Dobson's waiting list hopes

By Ian Murray
Medical Correspondent

BRITAIN'S intensive care service is in crises, doctors said yesterday as figures were released showing that that the number of reported flu cases had risen by more than 80 per cent in a week.

With an epidemic looming, the Government's waiting list initiative is in danger of being knocked off course, even though Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, announced yesterday that for the seventh month in a row the number of people waiting for an operation had fallen.

But Mr Dobson had to admit that even though the waiting lists had dropped by 31,000 during November, the number may have risen again last month because of the surge of accident and emergency cases, particularly from flu victims.



"A hospital bed! Now this is extremely rare"

Waiting lists are now down to 1,162,000 — close to the level they were at the time of the general election, having fallen from a peak of 1,297,000 in March. As the fall was announced, however, hospital managements were already cancelling hundreds of operations to clear beds for flu emergencies. Doctors battling to cope with the sudden rush for beds were pessimistic. "The intensive bed service is in crisis," Paul Lawler, President of the Intensive Care Society, said.

Although it is causing chaos in hospitals and numbers are rising sharply, flu has officially to reach anything like epidemic proportions. The latest figures show that 97,100 people caught caught the infection last week compared to 53,200 a week earlier — a rise of 83 per cent. However this is still only 185 cases per 100,000 of the population over the week, well below the epidemic level of 400 per 100,000. Numbers are expected to peak in the coming week.

Anne Widdecombe, Shadow Health Secretary, visited University College Hospital in Mr Dobson's Holborn constituency in London. She said the senior accident and emergency consultant there told her that things were under control because the hospital had shifted resources from waiting list surgery to deal with emergencies.

"Here is the proof of what the British Medical Association and the Opposition have been saying for months, which is that the political emphasis on the waiting list pledge has distorted priorities elsewhere and put patients in danger, fear and discomfort," she said.

Patients refused, page 9
Leading article, page 23

Shares keep on climbing

The stock market climbed to within touching distance of its record high as international markets continued to rally.

The FTSE 100 index closed up 190.6 points at 6148.8, just 30.2 points below last July's peak. Trading was heavy as investors overcame fears about the euro conversion.

In New York the Dow Jones rose more than 200 points to pass 9,500 points for the first time.................Page 27

Sierra Leone flares up again

The Foreign Office is telling all Britons to leave Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, after a combined force of rebels and members of the ousted military junta entered the city. Warnings were broadcast on the World Service as the Sierra Leone Government said that anyone on the streets would be regarded as a rebel and shot.....................Page 18

60F: the hottest January day for 150 years

By Tim Jones

LONDON yesterday enjoyed its hottest January day for more than 150 years, but severe flooding brought chaos to householders and motorists in northern England.

The capital saw the thermometer climb to 15.7C (60F), equalling the temperature recorded in 1841 and beating by a fraction of a degree the century's previous record, which was set at Kensington Palace 77 years ago.

But while southerners took to their shirtsleeves, people in the North were bailing out water.

Kendal was almost cut off as torrential overnight rain forced police to shut nine A-roads which disappeared under several feet of water. More than 50 homes in the town were flooded and fire crews had to use a boat to rescue seven people from a care centre for the disabled.

After the downpour, the Environment Agency issued red flood alerts for the Cocker in Cockermouth and the river Eden in Carlisle.

Those in London enjoying the balmy weather included 180 cheerleaders and musicians from Wisconsin who had performed in the capital's New Year's Day street parade. They were unable to return to the US because snowstorms had closed Boston airport.

The South has been basking in a warm southwesterly wind from the Continent. But this will change direction by the weekend to be replaced by a band of damp low pressure from the Atlantic. The Meteorological Office said the warm spell would give way rapidly to more seasonal weather, with temperatures struggling to reach 7C or 8C (44F-46F) by the weekend.

The worst is yet to come. Winter is back with a vengeance next week as meteorologists predict an easterly wind bringing cold from the North Sea.

US snow, page 16
Forecast, page 26

Trade minister is the biggest earner from shares


Lord Sainsbury of Turville

By James Landale
Political Correspondent

THE extraordinary scale of Lord Sainsbury of Turville's wealth was revealed yesterday when it emerged that the junior Trade and Industry Minister received £36 million in dividend payments last year.

An independent research body found that Lord Sainsbury received seven times more in dividend payments than any other company director.

The size of the dividends could come as fresh embarrassment to ministers, amid growing concern at the role of wealthy businessmen in government. Like Geoffrey Robinson, the millionaire who recently resigned as Paymaster General, Lord Sainsbury has faced questions about offshore trusts and the extent of his generosity towards Labour.

The peer, who joined the Government last July, is one of Labour's biggest donors. He gave £2 million to party coffers before the general election and £1 million afterwards to help to clear the party's overdraft. He also funded *Progress*, the new Labour magazine.

The findings came from an analysis of company records by Labour Research, an independent organisation funded by several trade unions but unconnected to the Labour Party. The group discovered 136 directors from 91 companies who received more than £500,000 in dividends in the financial year ending February 1998.

Lord Sainsbury came at the top of the list after receiving dividends worth £36,047,866. The next highest earner was David Instance, chairman of a Kent-based printing firm, who received £5,249,966.

Other politicians on the list were Lord Harris of Peckham, the carpet millionaire and Tory backer, who received £2.6 million; Sir Tim Sainsbury, the former Tory MP, who received £1.8 million; and Michael Heseltine, the former Tory Deputy Prime Minister, who earned £674,854 from his shareholdings in Haymarket publishers. Celebrities form the music world included George Harrison and Yoko Ono, who each earned £2.6 million.

Lord Sainsbury derives his wealth from an estimated £1.4 billion shareholding in the family supermarket chain. The last dividend payment from his shares was made days before he was appointed the minister responsible for science and technology. He immediately placed his entire shareholding into a blind trust, handing over full control of the portfolio to the trustees.

The move, required by the ministerial code of conduct, avoids potential conflicts of interests between his ministerial duties and his personal investments. Although Lord Sainsbury — who earns no salary as a minister — has no control over the investments, he can continue to receive income from them.

But the peer is more generous to philanthropic causes than political ones. He donated £200 million in Sainsbury shares to the Gatsby Charitable Foundation in the early 1990s.

Blair pledges support for his Chancellor

Prime Minister wants to end party feuding, Jill Sherman reports from South Africa

THE Prime Minister moved swiftly yesterday to bolster Gordon Brown's position and put an end to the simmering feud between the rival camps of the two men, which has rocked the Government in recent weeks.

Tony Blair used his first public comments since the resignation of Peter Mandelson to underline the Chancellor's role in promoting new Labour and making the party electable.

Looking tanned but visibly strained after his week's holiday in the Seychelles, Mr Blair insisted that his relations with the Chancellor were as close as ever. "Gordon's work in crucial to the creation of new Labour and winning the election. We have always worked as a team and we will always work as a team," he said. "This partnership is built to last."

He dismissed as rubbish the suggestion that there was a rift. "Gordon and I have worked together for 15 years. We were probably the two people who did most to draw up the policy of new Labour."

The Prime Minister said that it was time to draw a line under recent events, which have seen the resignation of two ministers and a press aide, and get on with delivering Labour's election promises. In what will be seen as a relaunch of the new Labour project, Mr Blair and senior colleagues will spend the next few weeks making policy speeches on topics such as health, education, welfare and the economy. John Prescott, David Blunkett, Gordon Brown and Robin Cook will be part of a Cabinet drive to put Labour's programme back on track with a range of announcements.

Mr Blair tried to put a brave face on the events of recent weeks as he left the Seychelles for his official visit to South Africa. "I am not denying that this has been a difficult week or two but these things happen," he said. But the Prime Minister looked tense and drawn and has evidently been deeply affected by the departure of Peter Mandelson, his former Trade and Industry Secretary, and the subsequent events. During his holiday he worked two to three hours a day at his computer as well as talking by telephone with Alastair Campbell, his press secretary, Mr Brown and other ministers who were promoted in the mini reshuffle.

Mr Blair chose himself to refer to his relationship with Mr Brown following the resignation of Charlie Whelan, the Chancellor's press secretary, after he had been persistently blamed for leaking details of the £373,000 loan to Mr Mandelson. The Chancellor was said to be "desolate" about the departure of one of his most powerful and loyal supporters.

Downing Street was said to have been determined that Mr Whelan should go after the row provoked by Mr Mandelson's resignation. But Mr Blair was adamant that the departure was handled in a way which was least damaging to Mr Brown.

Insiders said that the newspaper headlines following Mr Whelan's announcement had not been good for Mr Brown but they would have been a lot worse if the Chancellor had been forced to sack his press aide. They also made clear that the Prime Minister expected Mr Whelan to go within the next week rather than remain a target for Tory attacks. Mr Blair said he had no intention of being diverted from his New Labour programme of modernisation. He said that Mr Mandelson's departure would have no impact on the close relations with the Liberal Democrats and he suggested these could get even closer if it was in the interests of the country.

He also pointed out that the new appointments to the Cabinet — Steven Byers and Alan Milburn — were both modernisers, adding that Mr Byers, the new Trade and Industry Secretary, was as enthusiastic about helping business to prepare for the euro as Mr Mandelson had been.

During a series of interviews with the British media on his arrival in Pretoria last night, Mr Blair said that he had no regrets about taking a holiday during such a critical period of his government. He said: "I have had eight days holiday with my family and I feel better for it. I have not had a proper day off since the Omagh bombing in August."Mr Blair's efforts to present a united front were backed by Mr Prescott yesterday. He said that reports of a pact between himself and Mr Brown to exploit the departure of Mr Mandelson, which arose from a newspaper interview he gave last week, were "nonsense".

The Deputy Prime Minister, along with Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, was at pains to draw a distinction between the present Government and its Tory predecessors by emphasising there was no ideological split round the Cabinet table.

Mr Prescott said: "The divisions with them were on substance, ours have been highlighted on personalities rather than the Government's record."

David Clark, the former Cabinet minister sacked in last summer's reshuffle, said that the "unhappy events" of recent weeks should lead to the Government adopting a more collegiate style.

Mbeki backed, page 18

MICHAEL STEPHENS


John Prescott putting the Commons Christmas tree through a chipper yesterday as part of efforts to boost recycling

Barristers to launch Kitemark scheme

By Frances Gibb
Legal Correspondent

BARRISTERS' chambers are to be kite-marked to stamp out disreputable practices such as double-booking of cases.

The scheme will be introduced this year as part of reforms to modernise the Bar overseen by Dan Brennan, QC, the new chairman who took over this week.

The Bar is also to reconsider the rule that people cannot approach a barrister direct but must come through a solicitor. Already it allows professional bodies to deal directly with barristers: this month it is to consider licensing bodies such as trade unions, charities, health insurers and health authorities to brief barristers directly.

The Bar Council will publish the criteria for the kitemark plans later this year. They are likely to include how cases are managed, how time is billed to the client, how fees are charged and how well barristers communicate with clients. In particular it could stamp out the problem of late-returned briefs or instructions, causing a barrister to pull out of a trial at the last minute.

From Easter, chambers can apply for accreditation, or the Bar equivalent of a Kitemark, which will be granted by one of several outside organisations that have been approved by the Bar Council.

Brown advises Mandelson on his comeback

By Roland Watson, Political Correspondent

GORDON BROWN has been advising Peter Mandelson about how to make a return to the political front line, possibly before the next election.

The pair, whose recent past has been marred by personal suspicion and the aggressive rivalry of their aides, have had a lengthy meeting with the full enouragement of Tony Blair.

The meeting provides clear evidence that Mr Mandelson is already turning his mind to a return to office less than a fortnight after he resigned over his £373,000 home loan from Geoffrey Robinson. The former Trade Secretary has already told friends: "I will be back."

Mr Mandelson's friends said it was far too early to speculate about the timing of any such return, but he and Mr Brown have discussed the possibility of his spending some time in Africa involved in charity work. As a student he travelled to Tanzania and later addressed Third World issues while working for the British Youth Council. Friends say that he is considering an offer from Voluntary Services Overseas to make a film abroad.

The meeting between Mr Mandelson and Mr Brown will raise eyebrows at Westminster, where the supporters of both men have been at daggers drawn for years. Although they were once close friends, the leadership contest to succeed John Smith forced them apart after Mr Mandelson backed Mr Blair.

The meeting, which is part of a concerted effort by senior Labour figures to heal the deep divisions that have emerged from the wreckage of the home loan episode, has added irony. It was advice from Mr Mandelson to Mr Brown that sparked the freeze in their relations. The advice, in the form of a memo, was published earlier this week as part of the serialisation of an unauthorised biography of Mr Mandelson by Paul Routledge.

However, Mr Mandelson's friends say that he regards the support from the Chancellor as genuine and helpful.


Mr Brown: offered help to his old adversary

Business issues tartan tax warning

By Jason Allardyce
Scottish Political Reporter

ALMOST one in ten firms could pull out of Scotland if the new Scottish parliament uses its income tax-raising powers, according to a new report.

The survey of 111 Scottish business leaders by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland found widespread hostility to the so-called tartan tax. Sixty per cent of those surveyed believed that the tax-raising powers would be "detrimental" to their businesses and 7 per cent would look to move if it made trading difficult.

Businesses fear wage costs could soar, putting them at a competitive disadvantage if the new parliament exercises its power to increase income tax by up to 3p. They believe that jobs would also be shed as a result.

Labour and the Scottish Tories have ruled out using the powers during the first term of the new parliament, which will be elected in May. The Scottish National Party has not finalised its position, but the Liberal Democrats are prepared to put 1p or 2p on the rate of income tax for health and education investment if savings cannot be made elsewhere.

The Scottish Tory leader, David McLetchie, claimed that the SNP and Liberal Democrats would levy the tartan tax immediately, given the chance, and that they must consider the voice of business.

David Spence, president of the accountants' institute, added: "It is vital that business is listened to as the success of this group will keep the Scottish economy strong. Politicians who wield the new tax-varying powers should take heed of these findings."

The survey found that four in ten business leaders believe that the tax-raising powers will make no real difference and that one in five are either committed to remaining in Scotland or are adopting a "wait and see" approach.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Orange faction behind bomb

A new loyalist paramilitary group claimed responsibility last night for a bomb attack on a Gaelic sports club which left a workman slightly injured. The Orange Volunteers said it planted the small booby-trap device which exploded at midday outside the GAA club in Magherafelt, Co Londonderry. In a coded statement the group said: "The wider nationalist community now have everything to fear, now the siege of Ulster continues, with the British Government abandoning the loyalist people and the Irish Government standing up for republicans the Orange Volunteers are ready to defend our people."

The Volunteers, who oppose the Good Friday accord, emerged in November when eight armed, hooded men threatened to "assassinate the enemies of Ulster", particularly free IRA prisoners. Last month it claimed responsibility for a grenade attack on a bar in Crumlin, Co Antrim.

Meningitis death

A teenage boy who fell ill with meningitis after attending a Christmas party in Poynton has died. Trevor Stockton, 16, lost his fight for life at Macclesfield District General Hospital, Cheshire. The teenager had been in hospital for a week. A 17-year-old college student who also attended the party has been treated for the same strain of meningococcal meningitis.

Sacking payout

A company that sacked a man after accusing him of lighting up in his car on its no-smoking site has paid him an undisclosed sum. John Dixon, 54, a shift supervisor, who denied smoking, had planned to take his case to an employment tribunal. Parkside Flexible Packaging of Wakefield claimed that a security camera recorded a flash as Mr Dixon lit a cigarette.

Dome pay claim

Workers on the Underground rail link to the Millennium Dome have demanded bonuses of up to £5,000 to finish the £2.8 billion project in time for the 2000 celebrations. Six hundred electricians want bonuses paid at the end of their contracts if the Jubilee Line extension, from Green Park in central London to Stratford, east London, is completed by November.

N-waste protest

Hundreds of demonstrators objecting to plans for a nuclear waste dump in one of the most scenic parts of west Wales laid seige to the Welsh Office yesterday. The Anglo-Irish consortium behind the dump says the remote site is ideal for storing nuclear material, but the proposal has met an angry response in the tourism, fishing and farming heartland of Pembrokeshire.

Polish ruling

Poland's Supreme Court lifted an arrest warrant that accused Helena Wolinska, 79, wife of a former Oxford don, of fabricating evidence used to convict and hang a Second World War Resistance hero in 1953. Ms Wolinska, married to Wlodzimierz Brus, Emeritus Professor of Modern Russian and East European Studies, feared extradition. She has lived in Britain since 1972.

Plank walked

An important exhibit dating from Viking times has been lost after a workman at Ireland's National Museum threw it on a skip because he thought it was rubbish. The oak plank from the gunwhale of a 12th-century ship measured 10ft by 4ft and displayed typical Viking ship-building techniques. It was of great value in the study of ancient ocean-going vessels.

Happiness is being best friends

The engaged couple were at ease with each other and the media's awkward questions, reports Alan Hamilton


CHRIS HARRIS

Sealed with a kiss: Sophie Rhys-Jones and Prince Edward as they spoke to the massed ranks of the press yesterday in the garden of St James's Palace

THEY looked at each other a lot, and they laughed a lot. As Prince Edward and Sophie Rhys-Jones faced the press in the garden of St James's Palace yesterday, they seemed quietly and deeply at ease with each other.

There was none of the woodenness of a similar occasion when the Prince of Wales and Diana Spencer announced their betrothal, nor any awkward observations of the calibre of Prince Charles's remark about being in love, "whatever that is". Nor was there the overdone touchy-feely nature of Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson's announcement, when they all but threw buns at each other.

And nor, mercifully, was there a repetition of a previous encounter with the media, when Prince Edward flounced out of a press conference, angered by journalists' undisguised failure to be knocked out by *It's A Royal Knockout*.

Time has mellowed Prince Edward, and Miss Rhys-Jones knows a thing or two about public relations. They emerged from the palace arm in arm, she in a short-skirted grey suit with diamante trim on the lapels, he in a dark suit. They could have been a couple of moderately successful City traders getting hitched.

They posed for pictures by the door and strolled around the garden for more. The January sky was a heavenly blue. The cameramen asked them to kiss. They seemed at first to demur, but when the photographers chorused that their masters would go mad if they did not return with a kiss picture, the couple agreed.

They answered questions with good humour, standing close together, but easily. Miss Rhys-Jones's ring hand rested on the Prince's forearm, and she looked up at him a great deal, but not in that sugary, over-rehearsed way that showbiz brides-to-be so often adopt.

Asked why the couple got on, Prince Edward smiled as she gazed at him: "I don't know, we just do, really." Miss Rhys Jones chimed in: "I think we share a lot of interests, we laugh a lot, we have a great friendship."

The Prince turned serious momentarily when asked why they had decided to announce the engagement now. "It's impossible for anyone else to understand why it has taken me this long," he said. "But I don't think it would have been right before, and I don't think Sophie would have said Yes if I had asked her before, and, hopefully, by the fact that she did say Yes, I must have got the timing right." The seriousness dissolved into laughter, and he shot his bride-to-be an intimate glance.

How exactly did he propose? "Well, I spoke it," said the Prince, with a tiny hint of mock exasperation. "I managed to take her completely by surprise. She had no idea it was coming, which was what I really wanted to do. The trouble is, everybody always speculating always made it very difficult. Every time there was another round of speculation I had to go very quiet again."

Miss Rhys-Jones adopted a particularly adoring look. "I was slightly stunned for a minute. Then I suddenly realised I should actually answer the question. I said 'Yes. Yes please.' " She let out the hint of a girlish giggle.

The exchange took on a slightly more serious note when questioning turned to the wedding venue. The Prince said: "I just have always enjoyed St George's and Windsor especially. It's just a wonderful setting. It's a glorious piece of architecture and it's somewhere slightly different."

The last phrase left volumes unspoken about previous high-profile royal weddings that began as public spactacle and ended in grief. Prince Edward agreed that he was looking for something more low-key, but admitted that he would be deeply unpopular.

Flashing another warm glance at her fiancé, Miss Rhys-Jones added: "I think getting married is a very personal thing, and naturally there is going to be more interest in us than, obviously, with other people, but it is a personal matter and it is a family occasion."

Asked how she felt about joining the Royal Family, she agreed that it was "slightly nerve-racking in many ways, but I am ready for it now and I am fully aware of the responsibilities and commitments". She looked confident enough to tackle anything that her strange new life might throw at her. She also confirmed that she would keep a foot in the outside world by continuing with her job.

Would her background in public relations help her to cope? Yes, she said; she was perhaps slightly better geared up than others to second-guess what might happen.

And what of a family? The couple laughed, pleading the excuse of one step at a time.

They confirmed that both sets of parents were delighted at the news. Prince Edward denied that they had ever lived together, and Miss Rhys-Jones denied that she had ever issued any ultimatums on the matter of marriage. What about the ring? "It's that funny thing on Sophie's ring finger, actually. Diamonds are a girl's best friend, so I'm told." "No, you're my best friend." "Oh, right, sorry."

The key question could no longer be delayed. What about the failures of previous royal marriages? "Oh, someone had to bring that out, didn't they," said the Prince, hiding any irritation behind a laugh. He dodged the question of extra pressure on him as a result of other family misfortunes. "I think if anybody's going to get married, I hope they think that they are going to get it right."

Prince Edward had one final observation. "We are the very best of friends, and that's essential. It also helps that we happen to love each other as well very much, and it's great."

The encounter was over. Hand in hand, the couple walked back inside the palace. Within minutes the kiss was flooding television channels around the world and any hopes they might have harboured of a quiet family wedding vanished with the mist.

Reluctant suitors, page 22

Ring continues 150-year link forged by Victoria

BY MICHAEL HARVEY

THE diamond engagement ring sparkling on Sophie Rhys-Jones's finger yesterday fittingly combined tradition and modern fashion.

The Prince slipped it on her finger for the first time when they met at Buckingham Palace yesterday after he flew back from an appointment in Glasgow.

They had commissioned the triple-diamond ring, estimated to cost up to £50,000, from Asprey and Garrard in London's Bond Street. The jeweller, which has royal connections stretching back 150 years, also made engagement rings for the Duchess of York and Diana, Princess of Wales.

The three diamonds — a 2.05-carat round stone surrounded by two smaller heart-shaped gems — are surrounded by 18-carat white gold. Gem experts in Hatton Garden said heart-shaped stones were among the most difficult to produce.

Asprey and Garrard was formed last September by the merger of two of the most exclusive jewellery houses. Garrard has been Crown Jeweller since 1843, and Queen Victoria spent the equivalent of £8 million there during her reign.


The ring: three diamonds set in 18-carat white gold

The Princess of Wales's more traditional sapphire and diamond engagment ring was made by Garrard and cost about £20,000. It was an oval sapphire amid a cluster of 14 diamonds set in white gold. After her death, it was passed to her family.

The Duchess of York's engagement ring, costing £25,000, was also made by Garrard. An oval ruby was surrounded by ten drop diamonds in a star-shaped cluster, mounted in 18-carat white and yellow gold.

The Queen's engagement ring was platinum and set with 11 diamonds. It took two men just over a week to make. The central stone was three carats, about the size of a woman's little finger nail. It came from a ring owned by the Duke of Edinburgh's mother.

The Princess Royal was given a ring with a large sapphire between two diamonds by her first husband, Mark Phillips, in 1973. For her second marriage in 1992, to Timothy Laurence, engagement and wedding rings were made by one of the groom's family friends, Carol Darby, of Winchester. The engagement ring was again sapphire and diamond.

Royal wedding rings are traditionally made of Welsh gold. Those of the Queen, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, Princess of Wales and the Duchess of York were made from a nugget of gold mined in Wales in 1923.

Choice of chapel is break with tradition

BY JOANNA BALE

BY CHOOSING St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle for their wedding, Prince Edward and Sophie Rhys-Jones are expressing their desire for a more personal celebration.

Perhaps mindful that his elder brothers' and sister's ill-fated marriages took place amid the state pomp and grandeur of St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, Prince Edward appears to be opting for something a little more low-key.

He is, however, following in the footsteps of many of his more distant ancestors by choosing St George's, which has been the setting for royal weddings, christenings and funerals for over 500 years.

The last royal wedding there was the simple but stylish marriage of Lady Helen Windsor and Tim Taylor in 1992. Before then, it had not been used for a royal match since Princess Alice of Albany married Prince Alexander of Teck in 1904.

One royal Edward who enjoyed a long and fruitful marriage after a wedding at the chapel was Edward VII, who chose it for his wedding to Princess Alexandra of Denmark in 1863. The marriage lasted 47 years, until his death in 1910, and produced five children. However, his liaisons with Lillie Langtry, Lady Brooke and Alice Keppel are well documented.


St George's Chapel, the venue for the wedding

Its position within Windsor Castle, considered to be the Royal Family's home, will have added attractions for the Prince, who grew up there and is known to be very fond of it.

The building's construction began in 1475 during the reign of Edward IV and it was unaffected by the great fire at the castle in 1992. The architecture of the chapel, which can hold up to 1,000 people, is one of the finest examples of Perpendicular Gothic in the country.

The chapel, a royal peculiar under the Queen's jurisdiction rather than an archbishop's, is the spiritual home of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, the oldest monarchical order of chivalry, founded by Edward III in 1348. Its all-male choir is drawn from the College of St George, a secular community of priests and laymen.

Discreet charm of a bourgeois bride-to-be

Michael Harvey and Claudia Joseph find the Prince's choice reassuringly conventional

UNDER the harsh scrutiny of the media yesterday, Sophie Rhys-Jones displayed the discretion, charm and vivacity that won Prince Edward's heart.

It is these qualities that have helped her to gain the affection and esteem of the rest of the Royal Family. Her patience and decorum were noted with unanimous approval as she waited for Prince Edward to propose. Not that she ever complained at the delay, despite reports to the contrary.

The prospect of marrying into the monarchy must have been daunting, but she has dealt with it as she does her public relations work — with a cool head.

Miss Rhys-Jones has gradually been introduced to royal life and has spent time at Sandringham and Balmoral with the Queen and other senior members of the Royal Family. The Duke of Edinburgh, in particular, is said to be a fan. Such is their approval that she has a laminated Buckingham Palace pass to get her through security and up to Prince Edward's apartment, a luxury previous royal girlfriends never enjoyed.

Her sporty side — she likes skiing, sailing and windsurfing — is in her favour, as is her uncontroversial background. Unlike other recent royal brides she is the product of a stable home, the daughter of middle-class respectability, untrammelled by any aristocratic connections. Her father, Christopher, ran an import-export business dealing in car tyres with Hungary. Her mother, Mary, a former secretary, supplements the family income by taking in secretarial work at their Victorian farmhouse in the village of Brenchley in Kent. Miss Rhys-Jones has an elder brother, David, who works in insurance.

She was educated privately, first at Dulwich College preparatory school in Cranbrook, Kent, then as a day girl at Kent College for Girls. She attended a secretarial college and worked part-time in a pub before, in classic Home Counties fashion, she moved to a flat in West Kensington in 1983.

Public relations was an obvious choice for the bright, bubbly young woman and she found a job as a secretary at the public relations firm Quentin Bell, then for three years at Capital Radio. She met Prince Edward there through friends and they became "nodding acquaintances".

Next she moved briefly to Switzerland as a ski rep. She fell for an Australian ski instructor and followed him to Sydney, where she worked as a tour company representative. The romance over, it was back to London to work as an events organiser for the Macmillan Nurses Appeal.

Within a year of returning she had been headhunted by Brian MacLaurin, a public relations consultant, for his firm MacLaurin Communications and Media. Her work included PR for the infamous Mr Blobby, but her life was about to go distinctly upmarket. In August 1993 she was sent to Queen's Club, the smart tennis venue in West London, where she met Prince Edward properly for the first time. Posing for publicity shots, she put her hand over his shoulder.

The Prince was smitten by her humour and confidence and within a few weeks they were an item. By October their secret was out. Miss Rhys-Jones's PR experience has helped her to cope with equanimity with the media's unceasing scrutiny. Only one thing is guaranteed to annoy her, and that is to imply that she is a Diana clone. She has made attempts to present herself as a glamorous figure with a new haircut and designer clothes. But she knows she could never compete with the Princess, if only because of her "sturdy, not quite firm, Welsh legs".

Whatever royal role she will now take up, she is keen to keep up her PR work. In 1996 she and a colleague, Murray Harkin, 33, set up their own company, R-JH Public Relations, with a selection of upmarket clients. Turnover last year was about £750,000.

Mr Harkin said: "She will continue to work for the foreseeable future. It is her own company. I think it has given her her own standing."

Miss Rhys-Jones told colleagues about the engagement on Monday and they celebrated with champagne. Mr Harkin said: "I have never seen Sophie so happy. She was absolutely radiant. I think she would like children one day. She loves children."



Pub near the family home where Miss Rhys-Jones worked



CHRIS EADES

Christopher and Mary Rhys-Jones outside their home in Kent after the announcement of the engagement yesterday

Barmaid who pulled pints at the local

By Susie Steiner

IN THE small community of Brenchley in Kent, where Sophie Rhys-Jones's family have lived for more than 30 years, villagers tutted at the invasion of a hungry press but could not contain their excitement that a local girl had made good.

Christopher Rhys-Jones disclosed that the Prince paid a visit last month to ask formally for his daughter's hand. Mr Rhys-Jones, 67, and his wife Mary emerged briefly from their £200,000 cottage confirming that they were "thrilled", "delighted" and "very happy".

The former car salesman, who once sold tyres to eastern Europe, said: "Prince Edward came down between Christmas and the new year and asked my permission. I was extremely pleased. We like him immensely and we have known him some time. He is a very, very nice chap." Asked how his daughter would fit into royal circles, he said phlegmatically: "I think she will do very well. She isn't exactly catapulted in. It has been a fairly long apprenticeship."

As an 18-year-old Miss Rhys-Jones was well known at the Halfway House, where she worked as a barmaid. Michael Noakes, 56, a farmer who has visited the country pub for 40 years, said: "She was pleasant, very attractive and well mannered — a pleasure. She always used to fill the pints and would banter and joke with regulars."

Fashion is poisoned chalice for girl from the hockey sticks



Rhys-Jones: traditional tastes

By Lisa Armstrong, Fashion Editor, and Carol Midgley

AS JOB descriptions go, it's something of a poisoned chalice. Yes, the perks are tempting. Yes, any female Windsor consort under 50 with twinkling eyes and a winning smile will be wooed from here to kingdom come by designers anxious to have royalty wear their product (which, as most of us are now cynical enough to appreciate, roughly translates as being showered with freebies). But think of the level of scrutiny that Sophie Rhys-Jones will henceforth be subjected to.

Yesterday's outfit — designed by Tomasz Starweski, grey with a sprinkling of beads round the collar — was a case in point: the kind of outfit for the kind of situation that only royal-brides-to-be are likely to have to endure.

So who's to say whether or not she got it right? She looked as at ease as anyone with a score of television cameras homing in on the fruits of their skincare techniques might reasonably be expected to look. Not that any of this will stop the world from putting in their pennyworth whenever they think she's spending too much, being too fashionable or conversely being too frumpy and Letting Britain Down.

All the evidence suggests that Miss Rhys-Jones is not desperately interested in being an icon of style or of any other variety. Those designers who have got to know her in the five years since she has been associated with her Prince speak of a no-nonsense English girl with no-nonsense tastes (though only one, anonymously, dared utter the word "Sloaney"). She does not, as yet, go in for regular facials, aromatherapy or colonic irrigation and is more likely to take part in a jolly game of tennis than punish herself on the stepping machine.

In other words, she's the kind of girl whom the media, misled by the Taras and Tamaras and their season tickets to Prada and Gucci, believed no longer existed. She seems to prefer homegrown, trustily discreet designers such as Amanda Wakely and Starweski.

"She likes quite traditional clothes," says Maya Lucia Maini, the director for PR at Loewe, the company whose leather miniskirts, suede shirts and classy take on Euro-chic has featured strongly in Miss Rhys-Jones's wardrobe recently. "She tends to pick tailoring for work and quite sporty things off duty. But I don't get the feeling clothes are a passion with her. Unlike Caroline of Monaco, she wasn't brought up to be a clothes horse."

Still, the comparisons with Diana, Princess of Wales are inevitable, and prompted by the eerie likenesses in their hairstyles and deportment. A series of photographs of Miss Rhys-Jones, in *Hello!* a year ago, wearing a black dress similar in its cut to the simple lines that the Princess had latterly made her own, seemed a strange statement at the time. Was the imitation deliberate?

Whatever the case, Miss Rhys-Jones will discover that her image from now on will never be within her control. As the Princess and the Duchess of York in their contrasting ways discovered, the media either love you or they don't — and what you wear is merely the icing.



Diana: inevitable comparisons

Search begins for a spotless dukedom

Untarnished royal titles are in short supply, but the front-runner is Cambridge, reports **Alan Hamilton**

PRINCE EDWARD is expected to be created a duke on his marriage to Sophie Rhys-Jones. Genealogists believe that the most likely available dukedom is that of Cambridge.

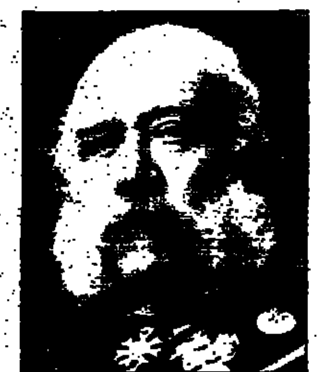
Created by the Stuarts in 1661, the title has an unfortunate history, but unblemished and unoccupied dukedoms are not in plentiful supply.

The first four dukes, all sons of James Duke of York, who became James II, died one after the other in infancy. The future George II was created Duke of Cambridge by Queen Anne in 1706; the title has been vacant since the death in 1904 of its last holder, George Duke of Cambridge, whose equestrian statue graces Whitehall.

George was Commander-in-Chief of the Army and a first cousin of Queen Victoria, neither of which prevented him from having a colourful private life. As a guest at Victoria and Albert's wedding in 1840, he met and instantly fell in love with Louisa Fairbrother, an actress five years his senior.

They lived as man and wife, Louisa being known as Mrs Fitzgeorge, but they did not get around to a proper marriage ceremony until shortly before the birth of their third son. Even then they had to marry in secret, believing that the Queen would invoke the Royal Marriages Act — which requires the sovereign's permission for her children to marry — to prevent the union.

George was buried along with his wife in a mausoleum in Kensal Green cemetery, and they now have no male heirs living. Since then there has been only a Marquess of Cambridge, a nephew of the last duke and the brother of Queen Mary, who was given the title


Last holder of title: George, Duke of Cambridge

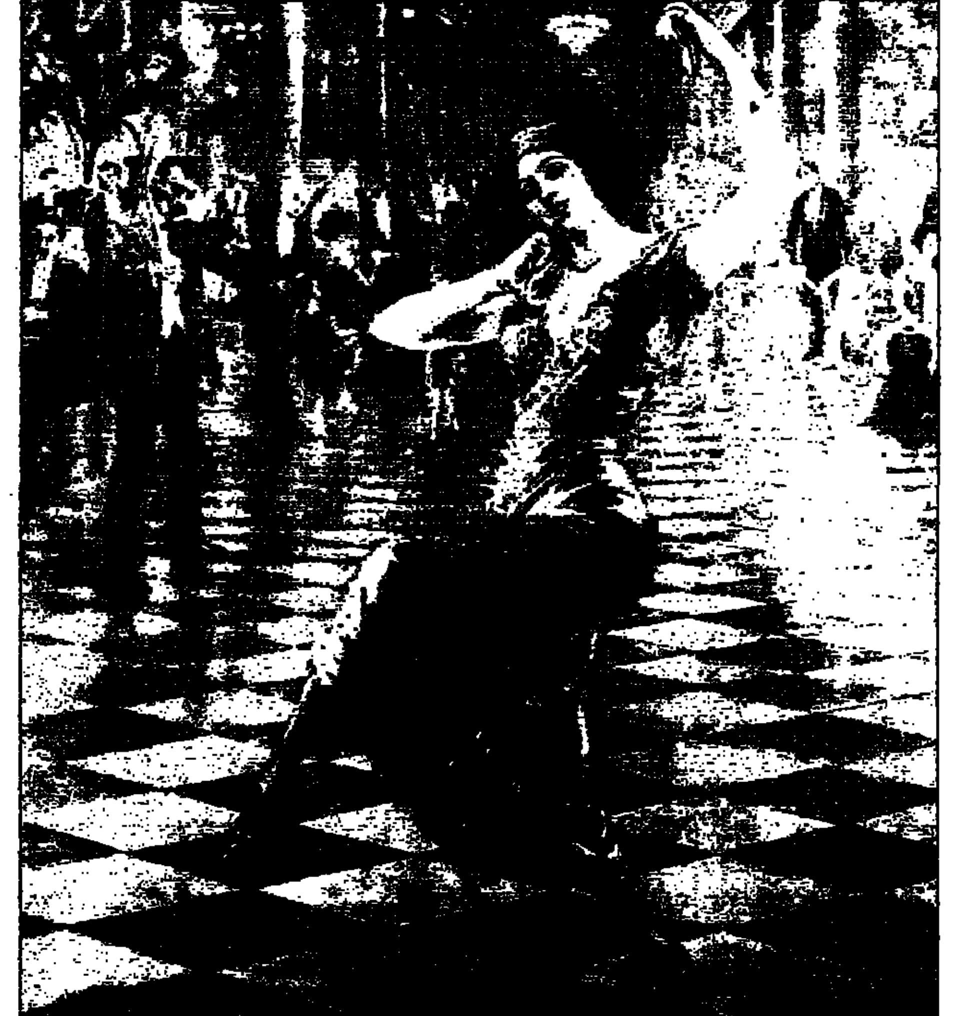
in 1917 when he surrendered all his German titles at the height of the First World War.

An alternative to Cambridge is that the newly engaged couple become Duke and Duchess of Sussex, a title that has had only one holder, a son of George III who was given it at the end of the 18th century. George had so many sons that he had to create new titles to satisfy them all.

Of the available dukedoms, the most unlikely to be bestowed on the Queen's third son is that of Clarence, which has an even more unfortunate history than Cambridge. The only Clarence to reach the throne was the duke who became William IV; the last holder, Albert, eldest son of Edward VII, has long been suspected of being the true identity of Jack the Ripper, the notorious killer of London prostitutes.

"Clarence is too closely associated with murky characters, and with drownings in butts of Malmsey, to be bestowed on one of the Queen's children," David Williamson, co-editor of *Debrett's Peerage and Baronetage*, said yesterday. "But given present-day trends, it is quite possible that any dukedom bestowed on Edward will only be for his lifetime, rather than a hereditary title."

Prince Edward, of course, would be perfectly entitled to buck all historical precedent and refuse all titles except the one with which he was born. That, however, would leave his bride with the unhappily cumbersome title of Her Royal Highness Princess Edward.


Louisa Fairbrother, the actress the Duke secretly married after she bore him two sons

Will it be a hit with shoppers?

By Adam Sherwin

MAKERS of royal memorabilia are hoping that this marriage will prove as lucrative as that of the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1981.

Bone-china busts of Sophie Rhys-Jones are hastily being planned for the serious collector, while traders are preparing to hawk T-shirts depicting the couple.

More than 2,300 items were available at the time of the Waleses' wedding, encouraging the public to part with an estimated £383 million, a record for a royal event.

The wedding of the Duke and Duchess of York has produced few items of lasting value. A commemorative Sarah Ferguson plate will not make one rich. "They are good for Frisbee-throwing, but, sadly, they are virtually unsaleable," said Mark Oliver, royal ceramics expert at the auctioneers Phillips.

Royal Doulton admitted surprise at the engagement announcement: "We don't really have enough time if the wedding is in a couple of months, but we hope we can produce what people want."

Artist formerly known as Prince Edward

By Michael Harvey

IN THE first defining decision of his adult life, Prince Edward made it clear that he wanted to be his own man.

Instead of following his brothers into a career in the Armed Forces, he dramatically quit the Royal Marines after less than a year. The jeering criticism from the public is something that he will never forget.

The Queen's youngest son turned instead to the theatre and later founded his own television production company, Ardent Productions. He insists on being called plain Edward Windsor, but admits that, despite a promise not to trade on his royal connections, much of Ardent's initial success was based on programmes about his family's past. He now believes that being a prince is a hindrance in his profession because he has to prove himself a hundred times over.

The same can be said of his private life. The Prince, 34, is painfully aware of the monarchy's recently turbulent history, particularly the collapses of his brothers' marriages. More than anything, perhaps, the desire to avoid making similar mistakes in his relationship with Sophie Rhys-Jones has shaped the past five years of his life.

He has chosen St George's Chapel for his wedding because it was "somewhere slightly different", and he and his fiancée want no repeat of the spectacular marriages of the Prince of Wales at St Paul's Cathedral and the Duke of York at Westminster Abbey.

Miss Rhys-Jones was the Prince's first relationship of any substance. He had stepped out with a number of girls — including Ulrika Jonsson and the actress Ruthie Henshall — in his theatre days, and the media glare was intense. With Sophie, he was desperate to protect the blossoming romance.

Soon after it became public, he even took the then extraordinary step of publicly pleading with newspaper editors in an open letter to be left in peace. He has remained touchy on the subject, but yesterday the speculation was over and a markedly more confident and self-assured Prince was on public display. With Miss Rhys-Jones at his side, he feels more grounded and, with Ardent at last about to turn the corner, he is sure he has found his true vocation.

He always said that he would not think about marrying until his business was up and running. It has lost £1.5 million over the past five years, but in 1998 it should break even for the first time with a turnover of more than £3 million. He has high hopes for a series of major costume dramas based on the popular Inspector Pitt novels written by Anne Perry. The first, *The Cater Street Hangman*, was shown on ITV last year.

The Prince's career path, however, has been strewn with problems. When he left his Scottish public school, Gordonstoun, it was as head boy with four creditable A levels.

Three years at Cambridge followed, where his great interest became drama. Despite that, he followed his brothers into the Services in 1986 and joined the Royal Marines, where he was to stay for seven months.

His love of the theatre later led him to become a production assistant with Andrew Lloyd-Webber's Really Useful Theatre Company. He left two years later to set up a production company before founding Ardent with his close friend Eben Foggitt in December 1993.

The Prince, like his brothers, sister and cousins, is no longer on the Civil List, but receives £96,000 a year from the Queen to run his private office. Compared with some other members of his family, he carries out relatively few royal engagements. He is a trustee of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and he is patron of a string of orchestras and theatres.

The Prince has taken out a 50-year lease on Bagshot Park, Surrey, from the Crown Estate. The property's red-bricked residence, set on 50 acres and formerly occupied by the Duke of Connaught, Queen Victoria's third son, is to be his marital home.


Prince Edward's television company, Ardent, is based at Bagshot Park in Surrey, where the couple will live

"I do"



هكذا بن الإجل

Monty saw Africans as 'complete savages'

Secret documents reveal grand imperial design, reports Richard Ford

VISCOUNT Montgomery of Alamein dismissed the African "as a complete savage" who was incapable of developing the continent himself, according to a secret report he prepared after a tour of 12 states.

He proposed plans to amalgamate British interests in Africa into three federations that would act as a vast reservoir of labour and minerals to ensure the survival of the UK, according to papers released at the Public Record Office in Kew, southwest London.

Montgomery, then Chief of the Imperial Generals Staff, warned Clement Attlee's Labour Government in 1948 that, in the event of a showdown between the East and West, "then Africa goes with the West". In a secret report, of which only ten copies were prepared, he advocated a grand design for African development and a "master plan" for each British colony.

He recommended the creation of a west African federation based on Nigeria and Ghana, a central African federation based on Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia, and an east African federation based on Kenya and Uganda.

He wrote that there would be immense difficulties, but that there had been similar problems during the invasion of Normandy in 1944. "There will be many people in the UK who will oppose such a plan on the grounds that the African will suffer in the process. There is no reason whatever why he should suffer, and in any case he is a complete savage and is quite incapable of developing the country himself.

"We must advance, courageously, as did Cecil Rhodes," he said. "The plain truth is that these lands must be developed in order that the British may survive."

Montgomery said the colonies contained minerals, raw materials, labour, and food in almost unlimited quantities.

His report said that "brains and go-getters" were needed to help in the development of Africa. It said there was a marked lack of men of ability in the African colonies. His report of a visit to French Morocco, Gambia, Gold Coast, Nigeria, Belgian Congo, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt in the autumn of 1947 is highly critical of the lifestyle for white settlers. He wrote: "Life flows at a very easy tempo; conditions are easy, with no restrictions on food or other necessities of life. There are masses of servants and no-one does anything for him or her self. This is bad for character and is particularly harmful to young people and children."

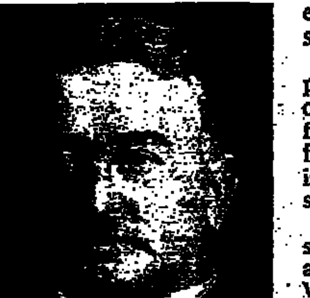
Montgomery advised the Secretary of State for the Colonies that there was no time to lose and that those who opposed him should be "eliminated ruthlessly" and others who engaged in "belly-aching" should be "stamped on".

He was scathing about Emperor Haile Selassie, the ruler of Ethiopia. "The emperor is a fine title; but he is a pathetic figure, living an uncertain existence in an atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust."

He said the country was in a state of medieval feudalism, and described an "Alice in Wonderland" situation in which the emperor had built a house for him to stay in during his visit. He attended a picnic at which marquees were furnished with silver bowls, Persian rugs and masses of fruit. "Hollywood could hardly conjure up a more incredible scene." Montgomery added that on the way to the picnic he had motored through countryside where half-naked people were tending their flocks "as in the days of Abraham".

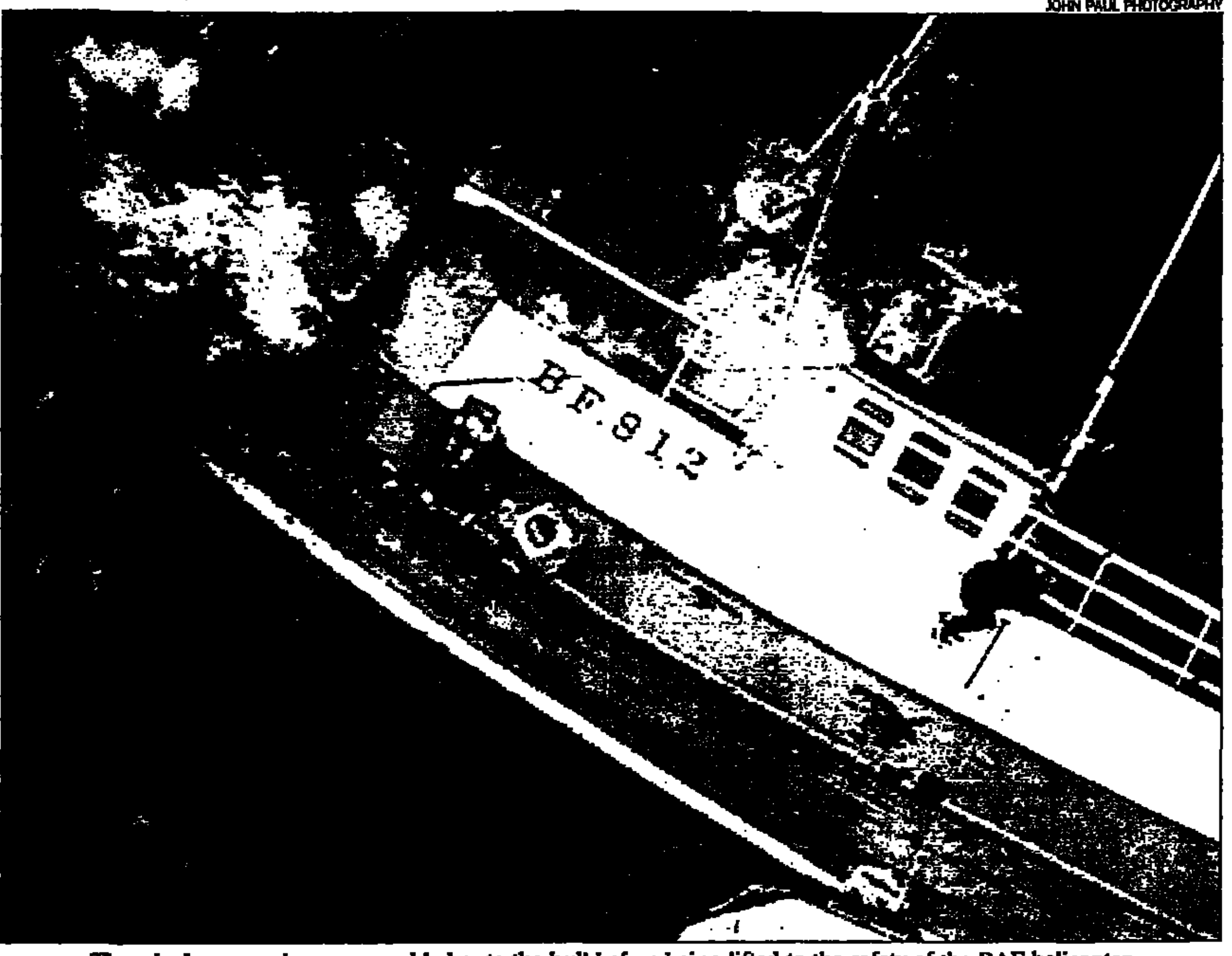
But the report was received coolly by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech Jones, who said Montgomery had greatly exaggerated the minerals on the continent. He said Africa was not an undiscovered El Dorado. "It is a poor continent which can only be developed at great expense of money and effort."

After receiving the Secretary of State's objections, Montgomery wrote: "It is obvious we disagree fundamentally on the whole subject. Time will show which of us is right."

Montgomery and Rhodes, whose courage he admired

JOHN PAUL PHOTOGRAPHY



The winchman and crew scrambled onto the hull before being lifted to the safety of the RAF helicopter



Crew escape sinking boat

TWO fishermen and an RAF helicopter winchman were airlifted from the North Sea yesterday when a fishing boat rolled over as they fought to keep it afloat.

The Banff-registered *Aurora* sent a mayday at 9am after taking on water 60 miles northeast of Fraserburgh. A rescue helicopter was scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth, and Flight Sergeant Trev Preece was lowered to the vessel.

He helped the two crew to try to pump out the engine room but then realised that the boat was about to roll over. He and the fishermen scrambled onto its side. Sergeant Preece, 41, said: "The helicopter saw this happen and came over immediately. When the strops came down I got one round one of the crew, but the other fell just as he grabbed hold of the second strop.

"The winch operator lifted them just enough to get them off the side of the boat and into the water. I swam over and managed to get the strop on the man properly." The three were treated for shock and the effects of swallowing diesel.

Linford Christie meets his match – a chicken

By Nick Nuttall
Technology Correspondent

DOMESTIC fowl such as chickens or turkeys could give the best human athletes a run for their money, scientists are claiming.

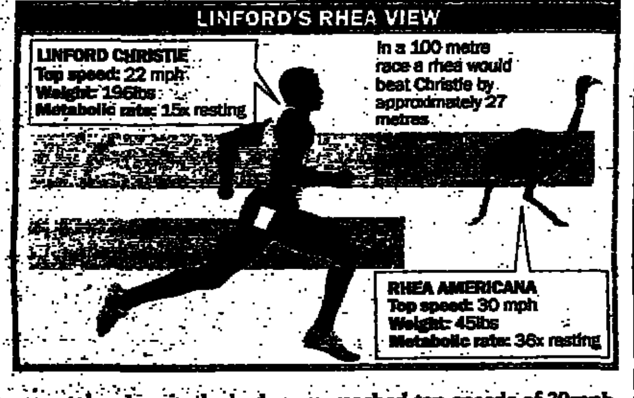
Studies of the running skills of flightless or near-flightless birds indicate that they can raise their metabolic rates massively to achieve sprinting speeds to outdistance many fast-moving mammals, including human athletes, over five to ten minutes.

The findings have come from tests on a flightless bird called the American rhea. Peter Weyand, of Harvard University, one of the team, said yesterday: "My guess is that it would have no problem beating Linford Christie".

Tests, described in *Nature*, showed that the bird could raise its metabolic rate — the speed at which chemical processes take place in the body — 36 times higher than the resting rate. The ratio is the highest recorded. Chickens or turkeys are thought to be able to manage 14 times. Dr Weyand said that, by comparison, a fairly fit human could raise his or hers tenfold; Linford Christie by 15 times and a marathon runner by up to 20.

Two years of tests on treadmills showed that rheas reached top speeds of 30mph, compared with Christie's maximum 22mph. "A 100-metre race would not be a problem," Dr Weyand said.

The scientists admit that they are puzzled over the ability of flightless birds to reach such formidable speeds. The traditional view is that such birds had evolved into "couch potatoes" because they had no natural predators.



Baby killers 'hidden by cot death cloak'

Ian Murray reports on the child health expert who says the awkward truth is being evaded

BABY killers are able to go undetected because coroners are too ready to accept that a child has been a victim of cot death, according to an expert on infant deaths.

Professor Sir Roy Meadow examined 81 cases of children killed by parents and found that 49 of the babies had originally been certified as having died of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). A further 29 were certified with another cause of natural death.

Sir Roy, head of the department of paediatric and child health at St James's University Hospital, Leeds, has often been asked by police to help to investigate infanticides and he has based his study on notes taken of cases over 18 years. He found that, in 24 cases, more than one baby in a family had died and, in one case, four babies died before the mother came under suspicion.

Writing in *Archives of Childhood*, published today, Sir Roy argues that "SIDS has been used, at times, as a pathological diagnosis to evade awkward truths". He suggests that it would be better if official use of the term were discontinued.

"Nobody doubts that there are many different causes of death for children categorised as SIDS and yet we continue to use the term as a diagnostic category and to discuss it as a single disease entity.

"We should be honest and admit that we do not know and, above all, we should be angry and intent on preventing so many young children dying suddenly and unexpectedly early in life."

He says that, as the number of cot deaths has fallen to below 400 a year because of better preventive measures, it should now be possible to organise a multidisiplinary confidential inquiry into every unexpected child death.

"It is a national scandal," he says. "If one out of every thousand 21-year-olds died suddenly and unexpectedly without an identifiable cause, there would be a national outcry."

His notes of the 81 cases make it clear that there is a pattern of baby killing and that an inquiry would make it possible to identify those who are likely to kill again. It should also have been possible, with better care, to have recognised potential killers and so prevented the death of many of the babies.

Babies certified as cot-death cases included those who were found to have swallowed balls of paper, coins and, in one case, a mitten. Two had fractured skulls, one a broken arm and many had bruising.

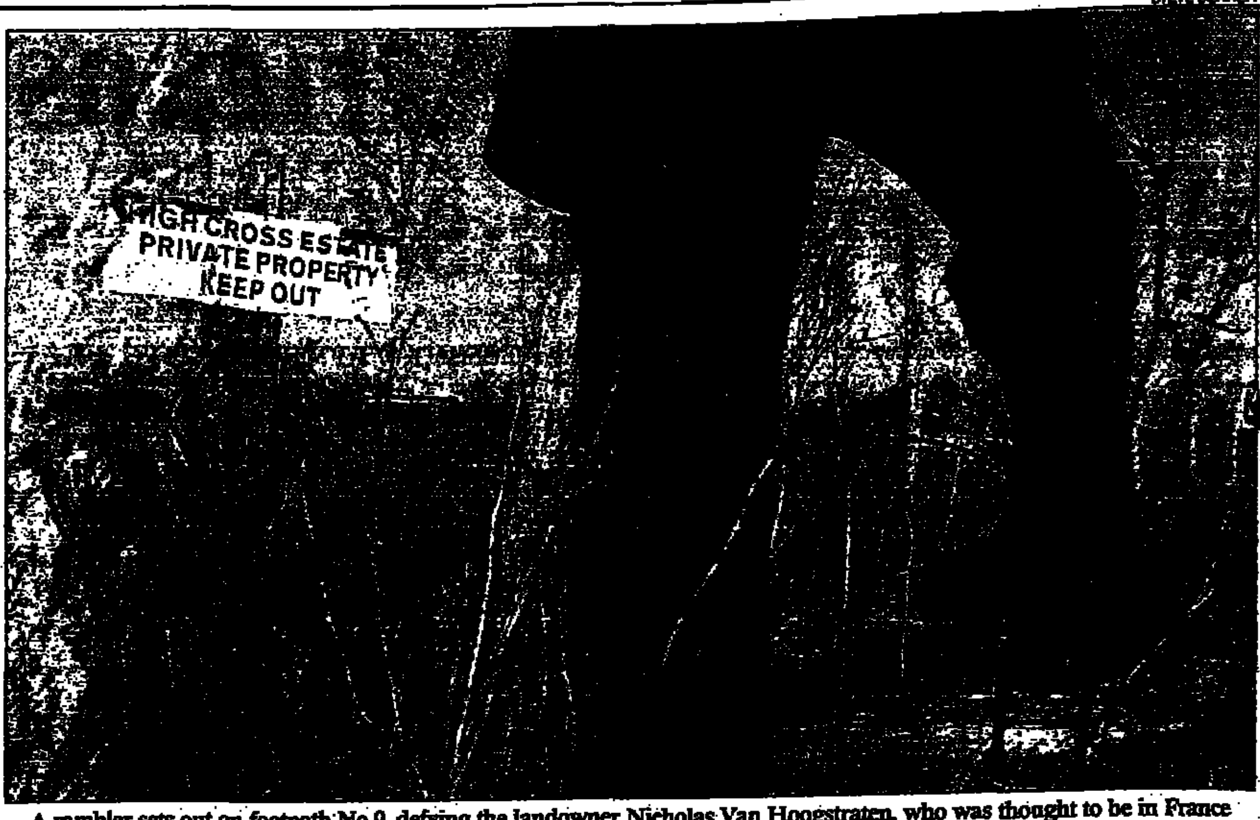
He found that more than half the babies had been examined by a doctor in the week before they died and were found to be healthy. They included 43 children who had been on children's wards only the week before they were killed. In 15 cases the baby was discharged in the morning and died at home in the evening.

In seven cases the death was "foreseen" by the parent, who predicted to others the day on which the child would die. On another four occasions the baby died on the anniversary of a previous sibling's death.

Sir Roy's case notes showed that most of the children had been born to mothers who had not had previous live babies. For the 14 parents who had an older child living, 12 of those children were considered to have been abused.

Most of the babies had been killed by their mothers, who had smothered or choked them. Most of the women smoked and belonged to disadvantaged families with no regular income. Half of them had a history of a fantasising disorder, such as Munchausen's syndrome.

The Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths said that it had always acknowledged that some unnatural deaths were being erroneously recorded as cot deaths, but it was unfair to exacerbate parents' pain by automatically raising suspicion. The foundation agreed with the idea of comprehensive investigation into all sudden infant deaths, and would prefer the term SIDS to be used consistently and correctly rather than abandoned.



STEVE BENNETT

A rambler sets out on footpath No 9, defying the landowner Nicholas Van Hoogstraten, who was thought to be in France

One small step down path of protest

A MUDDY and overgrown footpath that has been blocked by a millionaire landowner was the scene of a very civilised protest yesterday (Adrian Lee writes).

With orders from organisers not to make a nuisance of themselves and to mind the brambles, ramblers converged on the home of Nicholas Van Hoogstraten to walk the disputed route.

Its owner's descriptions of ramblers as "riff raff" and "the great unwashed" have made him a symbol of the hundreds of unresolved disputes between property owners and walkers throughout Britain. The protesters admit that the route in question, footpath No 9 at Framfield, East Sussex, is rather unremarkable, but the 50 ramblers who congregated there were determined to assert their right to walk it.

Mr Van Hoogstraten, 51, first blocked the path nine years ago, and later built an ugly, corrugated metal barn across it. Jack Dunn, 82, the local footpath secretary for Framfield parish, said that there should be an understated protest against such obstruction, but "there is no need for us to resort to violence — or even bad language".

Shortly after 11am, the ramblers, various dogs and six policemen set off in sunshine and clinging mud into the woods, over a bridgeless stream and across a boggy field. They were uninterrupted, and word had it that the enemy had gone to one of his other properties in the South of France.

The Ramblers Association, which organised the demonstration, said the path was part of 12,500 miles of public highway blocked by landowners in England. Sussex, with the South Downs and coastal trails, is not short of walking tracks, and footpath No 9 would usually attract only a handful of locals each year. Now notorious, it will be a target for future rambler action. "It is on our list," said one. "We will do this twice a year to make our point."

Ministers still keen to avoid legislation

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE Government is still hoping to secure greater public access to privately owned countryside without resort to compulsory measures.

Alan Meale, a junior Environment Minister, said yesterday: "We are striving to get a series of voluntary agreements and arrangements with the land-owning community. We believe that is the best course we should follow."

His remarks come after the recent disclosure in *The Times* that the Department of the Environment was disappointed with the result of consultations with landowners and was again considering legislation to force landowners to allow the right to roam.

Despite the lack of progress, Mr Meale told 450 farmers and food industry representatives at the annual Oxford Farming Conference that the Government was still hoping that legislation would not be necessary.

His comments were warmly welcomed by the Country Landowners' Association. Ian MacNicol, the president, said: "This is the first time I have heard a minister spell out so clearly the Government's preference for a voluntary approach. If we can make the voluntary route work, that is terrific work."

But Mr Meale, who said that details of the access scheme would be unveiled soon, also told landowners that they could expect tough legal action if they would not agree to make sufficient amounts of land accessible to the public. "We have made it clear that if we do not get the degree of public access we require, then we will have to pursue primary legislation in this parliament. We hope we will not arrive at that situation.

"I have to say that if we go down the path of primary legislation, it would be very firm and wide-ranging. Let there be no doubt whatsoever about that." He said the Government wanted to ensure that new access was permanent and "provides certainty for users and land managers alike".

The Ramblers Association, which has been campaigning for a legal right to roam, believes that landowners will only concede adequate access if compelled to do so by law.

Body clock has its own alarm bell

BY NICK NUTTALL
TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

A HORMONAL wake-up call may partly explain why some people can control the time they wake without the need for an alarm clock.

Researchers have discovered that levels of a natural body hormone rise sharply in the hour before someone expects to come round. Scientists at Lübeck University in Germany tested volunteers' patterns over three nights. Some nights they were told they were to be woken at 9am and on other nights at 6am. The researchers also "surprised" the 15 volunteers by waking them earlier than expected.

During the experiments, reported in *Nature*, the researchers measured levels of the hormones adrenocorticotropin and cortisol released from the adrenal and pituitary glands. Concentrations circulating in the bloodstream both rose steadily during sleep. But in the hour before someone expected to be woken, levels of adrenocorticotropin soared. In volunteers woken up before the anticipated time, levels of this hormone were about a third less.

Visual aid to quitting cigarettes

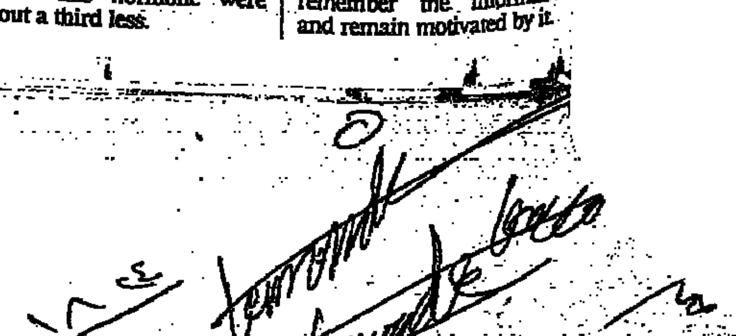
BY CAROL MIDGLEY
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

SMOKERS who have made a new year's resolution to quit are being invited to try a new weapon in their battle against addiction.

STOP! is a glossy magazine being backed by the Government and promises to help people to kick the habit by the power of entertainment. Spurred by the success of diet magazines, the Health Education Authority conducted research in 1996 and found that 35 per cent of Britain's 15 million smokers wanted to read a magazine about giving up.

At £1.75, less than a packet of ten cigarettes, it features articles by celebrities such as Anne Robinson and the actress Dervla Kirwan in which they recount their own experiences of giving up smoking. There are also features about products and techniques, quizzes and humorous stories from around the world about smoking. The magazine will also test new products.

Nicola Willis, the Editor, said that it worked on the principle that if people were entertained they were more likely to remember the information and remain motivated by it.



Intensive care units 'refuse 1 in 5 patients'

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

INTENSIVE care units in Britain are fuller and have sicker people in them than anywhere else in the world, according to Paul Lawler, president of the Intensive Care Society.

Dr Lawler, who runs a 12-bed unit at South Cleveland Hospital in Middlesbrough, said that patients were having to be moved around a great deal to find an empty bed. He had admitted two patients over the weekend and now had no beds available to readmit one of his own patients who needed care.

"Intensive care units are refusing around 20 per cent of the patients being referred to them," he said. "In some cases this is because they are not ill enough. In a very small number of cases it is because they are so ill there is no point in putting them in an intensive care bed since they are not going to survive."

If there was no room for a seriously ill patient in one of the unit's beds, the options were to leave them on the general ward or put them into a holding bed in an operating theatre recovery room until a bed became available. Some patients were kept in recovery rooms for up to 24 hours.

Moving a patient to another hospital was only undertaken as a last resort. "It means that you have to send the patient off in the ambulance with a doctor and a nurse. That means you denude a hospital, which already hasn't got the facilities to look after the patient, of two members of staff who are needed to look after other patients. You don't move unless you are at the end of your tether and the fact that so much of it is going on at the moment shows how desperate the situation is.

"Intensive care in this country is in crisis at the moment. Nobody can deny that because of all the transfers that are going on."

He said that, because last winter was so mild, managers should have been prepared for the rush of extra patients this year. "The problem with intensive care beds was predictable, but unfortunately too little was done in time. The lead-in time to open a bed is up to three months. Extra facilities should have been put in last October, when the first evidence of a looming problem appeared."

Julian Bion, an anaesthetist at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, and the British representative on the European Council of Intensive Care Management, said the shortage of beds meant patients were often referred to intensive care units too late.

"There are very severe problems at present, made worse by the fact that nurses are getting flu. We are functioning in an environment where we have just enough resources for the sickest patients for part of the time.

"We are very close to the edge and we are getting pushed over the edge by the increasing number of emergencies. A lot of people are in wards who should be in intensive care and a lot are being discharged from intensive care into the wards far too soon.

"There is no question that a lot of patients should be referred to intensive care earlier and the reason this is not happening is that there just are no beds. They often are only referred when their condition has deteriorated to a point where it takes a great deal more to save their lives."

The growing pressure on intensive care beds was caused in part by the growth of major operation procedures, including transplants. There were also more people being treated who would have not been in the past. "If you had an 80-year-old with an acute cardiac arrest, in the past he would have been allowed to die. Now he is brought into an intensive care unit, treated and sent back to the ward, where he dies two weeks later. Society must decide who we must treat and for how long."

Deborah Dawson, head of nursing at the intensive care unit at the Royal Sussex Hospital in Brighton, said that it was impossible to keep a full complement of 50 nurses needed to run the seven-bed unit. "There is such pressure on the nurses that, as soon as they get to the point where they are qualified to work unsupervised in the unit, they leave. They can get more money working for an agency and don't have to put up with the same hours.

"The consequence is we are always about three nurses short and having to recruit juniors to do the work. That puts an extra strain on the others, who have to monitor what they are doing all the time."

Leading article, page 23



Flu victims told to stop ringing 999

By Tim Jones

FLU sufferers were urged yesterday to stay away from surgeries and to stop calling the emergency services.

John Chisholm, chairman of the GPs' committee of the British Medical Association, said that in nearly all cases, doctors were unable to help.

Dr Chisholm said that the crisis facing hospitals was exacerbated by a small number of people who dialled 999 when all they had was flu. "There is nothing a doctor can do to cure uncomplicated flu and people should help themselves."

He said that sufferers should take plenty of rest, drink lots of fluid and use paracetamol or aspirin to lower their body temperatures. He urged the public, particularly the elderly, to have flu injections and reduce the risk of infection.

Criticising those who rang 999, he said: "Naturally, hospitals err on the side of caution and sometimes keep a flu sufferer brought by ambulance in overnight for observation, depriving a more seriously ill patient from having a bed." Other sufferers were walking into accident and emergency departments and increasing waiting times.

Patient is flown 150 miles to nearest free bed

By Alex O'Connell

AN ELDERLY man with breathing problems had to be flown 150 miles to hospital by an RAF helicopter because there was no room in intensive care units near his home.

The man was referred to a medical assessment unit at Hemel Hempstead Hospital, Hertfordshire, late on Saturday by his GP. He was complaining of a chest infection and the doctors decided that he needed to be put on a ventilator. They then discovered that the nearest available bed was at the Musgrove Park General Hospital in Taunton, Somerset.

A Sea King helicopter was sent from its Suffolk base and the patient was picked up for his 90-minute ride to Taunton.

A spokesman at the Hemel Hempstead Hospital said: "Doctors agreed that the best course of action was to transfer the patient to the nearest available intensive care bed in Taunton. Financial considerations were secondary to that." The patient was now in a comfortable position.

The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Ambulance Service said that the bill for the transfer could run to £5,000. Steve Jones, the spokesman, confirmed that the service had taken patients in his patch as far as Gloucester, Warwick and Lincoln in the past few weeks.

Another hospital, the Southampton General, faced the prospect this week of sending one patient to Yorkshire, 250 miles away, when they had only one intensive care bed left. Belinda Atkinson, its critical care director, said: "We fortunately did not have to transfer anyone. If it was ever in the best interest of the patient we would move them. But we would always try to look nearer home."

The night before, two patients had to be removed from the general adult intensive care unit of the Southampton General to make way for more urgent cases. One of the patients was moved to Bournemouth, the other endured an ambulance journey of about 125 miles to a hospital in Torbay, Devon.

Emergency team searches for beds around the clock

By Alex O'Connell

STAFF at the Emergency Bed Service work frantically around the clock to match seriously ill patients with the country's few available intensive care beds.

A team of bleary-eyed admissions officers in an airless southeast London office make constant calls to hospitals to find pillow space. As they toil beneath giant maps of the country and laminated boards displaying continually updated hospital vacancy figures, the room looks more like a war cabinet bunker than the headquarters for a national hospital bed search. None of the admissions staff wish to be identified for fear of receiving direct pleas from desperate patients.

One officer, who has worked at the unit for two years, said: "In the last week, it has been particularly difficult getting spaces for intensive care patients. The calls have been coming in thick and fast over the last couple of days with lots of people with chest infections and pneumonia needing acute and intensive care."

Another said that it would not be unusual for a London patient to travel to Manchester for an intensive care bed.

Graham Hayter, the general manager of the EBS, said: "There are transfers taking place which a lot of hospitals would say were outside their area. With intensive care we are worried that there are only a few beds available to us.

"We are keeping a close watch and are effectively saying to hospitals when they ring us that their chances of getting a bed for a patient that they need to transfer are less good than at other times."

The EBS predates the NHS and was set up in 1938 by the King's Fund. The 34 operational staff assist with acute emergency referral into London hospitals and operate the National Intensive Care service, which has been in place for two years. The EBS is funded by London health authorities, and the NIC also receives money from the Health Department.

"It is important to remember that an intensive care space is not just about the bed, it is about organising the right level of care for that patient," Mr Hayter said.

Permanent intensive care units were a British invention, but now we fall behind every developed country except for Greece in providing the money to run them. The average British hospitals can only spare 3 per cent of its income on intensive care, while German hospitals spend 9 per cent and American hospitals at least 10 per cent.

There currently are about 1400 such beds in Britain, about 300 of which are dedicated to paediatric care.



GEOGRAPHERS' CONFERENCE

Bus lanes alone 'will not shift Mondeo man'

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

THE Government's plan to shift people out of cars and on to public transport is unlikely to succeed without much greater investment, the geographers' conference at Leicester University was told yesterday.

Richard Knowles, of Salford University, said that partnerships between bus companies and local authorities to make bus travel more attractive — a cornerstone of the Government's policy — had produced very little evidence of a significant change in habits.

Of 16 such schemes, known as Quality Partnerships, only three had shown clear evidence that "Mondeo Man" would give up his car, Dr Knowles said. Bus use had increased in most cases by only a little and no studies had been done to discover where the extra passengers had come from.

"They could be people who used to walk, or they could be people who always travelled by bus but who are now making more journeys," he said. "We simply don't know."

An exception was a scheme in Ipswich, Super Route 66, where a section of road has been segregated for buses, which run between raised kerbs. A study has shown a 42 per cent increase in use, a quarter of the extra passengers coming from cars.

Most Quality Partnerships were too small and unambitious, Dr Knowles told the Royal Geographical Society — Institute of British Geographers' conference. They could involve bus lanes, bus priority at traffic lights, new buses, more frequent services, better bus shelters and information systems, or park-and-ride facilities. But the average length of new bus lanes introduced per partnership was 210 metres, too short to make any significant difference to the speed of bus travel.

"These token-gesture bus lanes have very little real effect," he said. "Comprehensive upgrades are needed, including route segregation, as in Ipswich, but these are much more expensive." The Ipswich scheme, involving a single route into the city, cost £2.3 million, while a typical Quality Partnership scheme cost £150,000 to £250,000.

Another successful scheme, at Scott Hall Road in Leeds, produced a 40 per cent rise in bus usage, but no measurements were made to show that any of the passengers had switched from cars. The same is true of one of the most ambitious schemes, the Edinburgh Greenways system involving five routes where the road is coloured green and restricted to buses, taxis and cyclists.

The first two phases of that scheme cost £7.5 million, and speeded up bus travel so that it now takes eight and a half minutes less to travel by bus into the city centre from its western edge than by car. The scheme is claimed to have increased passengers by 250,000 a year.

Dr Knowles concluded: "The Government's new integrated transport policy lacks the substantial new public-sector capital investment in public transport needed to encourage significant numbers of car drivers and passengers to switch to public transport. Evidence is limited as to whether Quality Partnerships can either attract significant numbers of car users or reverse the long decline in bus ridership."


RICHARD POHLE

Professor Rosemary Crompton, who says childcare is still "the bottom line" for career women in the professions

Women bankers pay family price

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

WOMEN who climb the management ladder in banking pay for their success by having fewer children, unlike their counterparts in the equally male-dominated profession of medicine.

The difference, according to Professor Rosemary Crompton, of the University of Leicester, lies in the control the women can exert over their lives. Doctors can plan their careers around child-bearing, whereas managers have to tailor theirs to suit their employers. She found the same pattern in five countries — Britain, France, Norway, the Czech Republic and Russia — studied as part of a survey funded by the Economic and Social Science Research Council. She told the conference that the results indicated that the key question for career women was the same as it had always been: who will look after the children? It was unnecessary to resort to arguments about the "gender nature" of particular jobs to explain why women did not do them.

The numbers of women in both medicine and banking management are rising. For the study, 15 women doctors and 15 women in banking, all aged between 30 and 50, were interviewed in each of the five countries. In Britain, only half the bankers had started a family and only three had more than one child. All but one of the doctors was a mother and most had more than one child.

Professor Crompton said: "There have been a lot of claims recently that men are responsible for holding women back. I am not saying that it is not a valid point, but childcare is the bottom line."

Rampant grass dulls beauty of moorland

By Our Science Editor

THE dullest grass in Britain — so dull that even sheep dislike it — is ousting heather from Exmoor and large areas of Wales, the Peak District and the Yorkshire Dales.

Purple moor grass grows to knee height but quickly loses its leaves and then resembles dry straw. The result is white-coloured moors, with a faint purple sheen in late summer.

No one is certain why *Molinia caerulea* is spreading, but neither livestock nor environmentalists are pleased. It is not very palatable for sheep or cattle, except in early spring, and tends to lead to an impoverished flora, with less heather and sphagnum moss.

It is "the damp moorland equivalent of bracken", Professor Frank Chambers, of Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education, told the conference.

Studies by Professor Chambers and a colleague, Dmitri Mauquoy, found that *Molinia* had been present for a long time, but was not as dominant in the past. Explanations for its rise include change from cattle to sheep-rearing and climate change. Professor Chambers believes that nitrate enrichment, largely the result of pollution, is mainly to blame.

It is unclear how the purple invader can be stopped. Herbicides may help, or we could learn to love it. "Unfortunately, it is a very boring grass," Professor Chambers said.

Rail firm surveys are condemned as useless

By Arthur Leathley, Transport Correspondent

RAIL companies were criticised yesterday for carrying out surveys that are "misleading" and "close to useless".

Britain's 25 train firms have been forced to conduct surveys every six months to gauge passenger opinion on the quality of service.

A report by *Which?* magazine claims that operators posed questions about relatively trivial aspects of rail travel, but failed to question passengers about more important issues, such as train frequency.

The authors of the report *criticise the train companies* for failing to have a set of core questions that are consistent across the rail industry.

It also complains that some of the questions asked in the surveys are misleading. For example, Connex South Eastern, which runs services in Kent, *asks passengers to rate its* performance "for minimising delays" on a scale of one to ten.

John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, has already demanded a shake-up of the way that train operators conduct surveys, calling for questions to be vetted more closely by John O'Brien, the Rail Franchising Director.

He wants results of surveys to be more reliable and to lead to financial penalties for operators who fail to meet their targets, in the same way that firms are penalised for running late trains or for cancelling services.

The report says that too many rail firms fail to ask questions about issues rated most important by passengers, such as overcrowding and train frequency. It says that, of 21 companies that published survey results last year, only nine asked about train frequency, *13 asked about* overcrowding and eight about information given on delayed and cancelled trains. Four firms did not produce survey results because they were among the last to be privatised.

Even train companies owned by the same rail group *ask questions about differing* aspects, ranging from standards of catering, the audibility of platform announcements, cleanliness of trains and even the noise of trains.

The Railway Forum, the rail industry's umbrella organisation, conceded that some of the *criticisms in the report* were well-founded. A spokesman said that it was taking time to improve services after decades of underinvestment.

Helen Parker, editor of *Which?*, said: "The rail companies' current passenger surveys are close to useless. *They should be the responsibility of* regulators, not the companies."

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PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY: □ executive failings □ clumsy doctors □ humour in uniform

Stress test shows up dark side of the boss

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT



PAUL ROGERS

Testing trio: Emma Greig, left, Geoff Trickey and Gillian Hyde say the American-devised test for senior managers is virtually cheat-proof

PSYCHOLOGISTS have developed a test that companies can use to discover if their senior managers have a hidden "dark side".

Executives taking the 20-minute test are asked to give True/False or Yes/No answers to 168 simple questions, such as: Do you feel that you are ambitious? Are you confident talking in front of a group of people? Do you feel that you are witty and entertaining?

Testers claim not only to be able to identify a manager's strengths from the results, but also to predict whether these good points might ultimately lead to their downfall under stress. A person who is self-confident in normal conditions may become arrogant under stress and overestimate their capabilities. Somebody who is normally shrewd and a good judge of character may become distrustful and paranoid. A cautious person may be reluctant to take risks, while somebody who is diligent may become compulsive and obsessed with orderliness.

Geoff Trickey, a psychologist with the Kent-based Psychological Consultancy Ltd, which has introduced the test to Britain from America, told the British Psychological Society, meeting in Blackpool, that, unlike most conventional recruitment tests, which aim to demonstrate how people perform under normal conditions, the new test is designed to predict how they will act in conditions of stress.

He said: "It is designed to expose individuals who are most likely to flip, lose control or exhibit other types of counter-productive behaviour at times of stress that may make them impossible to work with."

The test, devised by the American management expert Bob Hogan, is particularly difficult to cheat at because the questions encourage people to highlight their strengths. To catch out any potential fraudsters, a "validity scale" is included that comprises a series of questions that 99 per cent of the general population could be expected to answer in the same way. It includes questions such as, "I have never unknowingly told a lie — true or false?" Anybody who answered "True" to such a question would be placed under suspicion.

Mr Trickey said that, although he had not subjected Tony Blair to the test, he believed the Prime Minister would emerge as a vivacious/dramatic character type. "He wants to be the centre of attention all the time, but there is a high chance that he could become dramatic and grab any chance to put on an emotional display of himself. People like this are not remotely interested in others as people, but are interested in using others as an audience. Once they have got people listening to them, what they are actually saying is all superficial."

President Clinton would probably be of the same type as Mr Blair, Mr Trickey said. He suggested that Peter Mandleson, the former Trade and Industry Secretary, would rate as charming/manipulative. "It does not matter if you are manipulative as long as you are able to be charming too. But when the charm goes under stress, then people no longer trust you and they wont follow you any more."

Mr Trickey and his colleagues, Gillian Hyde and Emma Grieg, told the conference that the purpose of the test was not to persuade companies to recruit only bland people. It could, however, be useful in identifying a need for training or for raising the self-awareness. For those unable to afford the time or cost of the formal test, Mr Trickey suggested a simpler alternative. "You get very similar results from watching how people behave when they drive their car. You may find yourself swearing at elderly people, although you wouldn't dare speak to them like that if you bumped into them in a lift."



NET LINKS

http://www.ccl.org The Centre for Creative Leadership

http://www.hoganassessments.com Hogan Assessment Sstems (Bob Hogan's compay)

http://www.bps.org.uk The British Psychological Society

Computer reveals the sharpest surgeons

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN

A COMPUTER test to identify doctors who are likely to possess the exceptional skill needed for keyhole surgery was unveiled at the conference yesterday.

Keyhole surgery is increasingly popular within the National Health Service because it involves less invasive procedures and shorter recovery times, thus cutting hospital waiting lists. But it demands unusual perceptual skills: surgeons effectively work by remote control and have to master unusual hand-eye co-ordination techniques. Some surgeons are simply too clumsy.

Assessing trainees has, until now, been extremely fraught, with shortcomings being discovered only after a lot of expensive training or, at worst, after an operation has gone wrong.

The computer-based test, devised by a team led by Professor Dave Bartran, of the SHL Group in Hull, should help to overcome this problem. In the test trainees have to trace around shapes on a computer screen. Their dexterity, accuracy and speed and spatial ability are all measured. The researchers say that the test, which does not require experience of keyhole surgery, has proved to be a good predictor of fine motor control and of a person's performance when learning the procedures.

□ Trainee barristers from ethnic minorities are three times more likely to fail certain tests than whites, according to a study published yesterday.

Chris Dewberry, a lecturer at Birkbeck College, London, said that a study of trainee barristers who took the Bar Vocational Course in 1992-96 showed that performance in the examination was greatly influenced by the type of university trainees had attended and previous academic performance.

Candidates from ethnic minorities were more likely to have attended a "new" university rather than an older establishment such as Oxford or Cambridge and to have had poorer degree results.

Mr Dewberry told the conference that the findings could explain the relatively poor performance of ethnic minorities and other social groups in the workplace, as well as on training programmes.

Make 'em laugh to make output rise

The secret of increased productivity lies in managers' ability to be more humorous, a psychologist suggested yesterday. In a study of 50 air cadets, humour was identified as the most important quality in a leader, ahead of intelligence. The research was conducted by Howard Taylor, the head of psychology at Buckinghamshire Chiltern University in High Wycombe. He said that it carried serious implications for industry. Productivity could increase if managers used humour when they dealt with workers. "You could call it the humanisation of managers," he said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gulf man's cancer was 'natural'

A coroner has rejected a claim by the family of a former Intelligence Corps sergeant that radiation from satellite communications equipment used during the Gulf War caused the rare cancer that killed him. The rapid sarcoma on the forehead of Andrew Ross, 33, of Kirkheaton, West Yorkshire, was diagnosed two weeks before his death in April 1997. Roger Whittaker, the coroner, investigated the dangers of radiation and the possibility of exposure to materials such as Agent Orange, but recorded a verdict of natural death.

Ben test negative

The family of Ben Needham, who vanished on the island of Kos in 1991 aged 21 months, have been told that a lookalike boy spotted in Greece is not their son. DNA tests on a strand of hair grabbed by a tourist proved negative.

Threat to Tube

Fresh industrial action on London Underground moved a step closer after the main rail union, the RMT, decided to ballot its members over job security, redundancies and changes to employment conditions.

Bosnia pilot dies

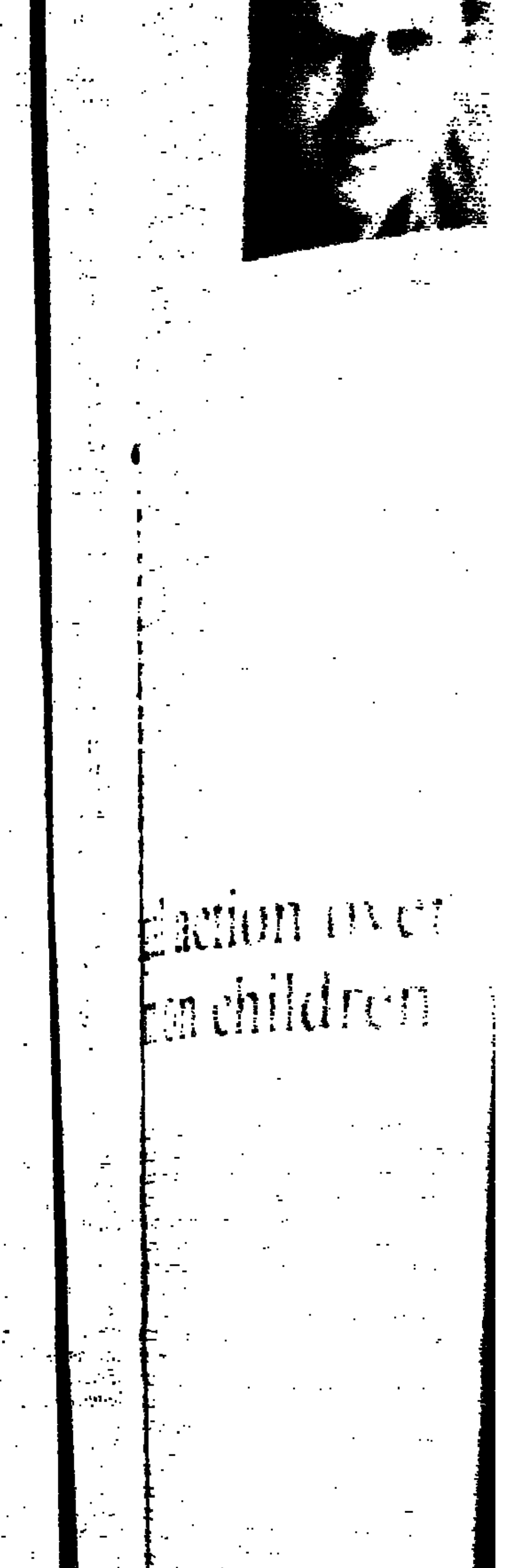
An army pilot injured when a helicopter crashed in Bosnia has died, a month after his marriage. Corporal Chris Addis, 26, was among three crew on the Lynx killed when it plunged into a minefield near Gornji Vakuf last month.

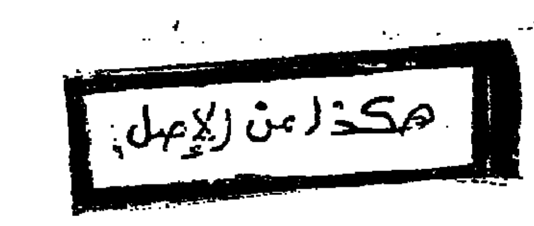
In a royal spin

A royal warrant has been awarded to the Prince of Wales's laundry. The Anton Laundry, in Andover, Hampshire, uses environment-friendly methods. It won the contract for the Prince's home, Highgrove, five years ago.

Binmen win

Four dustmen sacked for collecting too much rubbish won a claim for unfair dismissal. Torbay council in Devon dismissed them for taking commercial as well as domestic waste. A tribunal said they had not done so for financial gain.


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Viewers find 'cynical' sex a TV turnoff

BY CAROL MIDGLEY
EDIA CORRESPONDENT

TLEVISION viewers are be-cuing more tolerant of the prayal of sex — but believe th it is often a ploy to boost rangs.

survey published by the Badcasting Standards Comnsion yesterday showed th attitudes towards sex sces — heterosexual and gay — had become significantly mre liberal in the past six yrs. In the watchdog's last suey, in 1992, 46 per of viewersaid it was acceptable to shw gay relationships on scen. That figure had risen to 8 per cent by 1998. Six yes ago 39 per cent of viewersaid hey found bedroom sces dfensive, compared wit 24 pr cent in 1998.

It while viewers were less shoked ly sex, they distrusted the motires of broadcasters. Lay Hove of Aberavon, chairwoman of the commission, waned roadcasters of cynicism among viewers, who had begn to ealise that sex was a weapon i the ratings war.

There were also more viewers who rought there was too mulh se on television (36 per cen lastear, compared with 32 per cet in 1997). "That may be the srt of a warning that people a: saying it's going too far," sh said. "There is a touch of cynicism creeping in which shows people feel they are being exploited.

"People accept sex is a fact of life and are generally relaxed about it. Some are even prepared to admit they enjoy watching it, but that's not to say they want to see it on the hour every hour."

Soap operas such as *Coronation Street* and *Emmerdale* have increased their sexual content, weaving adulterous affairs and teenage sex into their storylines. As a result ratings and press coverage have increased. One 65-year-old man in the survey admitted he had started watching the soaps because love scenes had increased.

Nearly half of viewers said they believed there was too much discussion about sex on daytime talk shows such as *The Jerry Springer Show*, *Kilroy* and *Vanessa*. They raised concern over the subject matter of the shows — such as a Jerry Springer programme — entitled "My sister slept with my three husbands".

Lady Howe said there had been a "pushing of boundaries" on sexual matters throughout the media. But she added: "Broadcasters have to understand that, while audiences have become more relaxed about the portrayal of sexual activity, there is not a universal climate of tolerance towards explicit material, particularly if it is gratuitous."

It up to broadcasters to take note of the viewers' attitudes. "Ultimately, if you turn off your audience, you don't have as many viewers."



Jerry Springer's subject matter upset viewers

ADRIAN SHERRATT

The singer and actress Cher arriving at Harrods in Knightsbridge yesterday to open the store's sale. She disclosed that she had bought some luggage during a sneak preview

Christmas Day stores report brisk business

BY ROBIN YOUNG

SHOPS that broke with convention by opening on Christmas Day claimed yesterday that the operation had been a commercial success.

Sainsbury's, which opened convenience stores in Headcorn, Kent, and Fulham Road, southwest London, said that there had been queues outside when the shops opened for business. Demonstrators who picketed the doors to protest against the opening found that the publicity they had created served only to increase the number of customers.

"People even travelled from London to use the Headcorn shop," a spokeswoman for Sainsbury's said yesterday. "More than 1,000 customers used the stores and business was fantastic."

The West Midlands Co-operative Society said it was likely to open its 11 stores in the region again next December 25 after attracting more than 2,000 customers. The society, which opened its shops from 10am to 1pm, said takings had been higher than for comparative hours on an average Sunday.

David Pinion, the assistant chief executive, said: "Customers showed their support by turning out in considerable numbers and sales were well above what we expected. It was a break with tradition, but the demand shows that shoppers very much appreciate the benefits which come with flexible opening hours.

"We are considering the position for Christmas 1999, but it is likely we will repeat the trial, possibly with an increased number of convenience stores open." Mr Pinion said opening hours may be extended, and added that they had "no problem" finding volunteers to work on Christmas Day.

All the stores the Co-op and Sainsbury's opened were convenience stores, not full-scale supermarkets. Convenience stores are so called because one of their special features is their longer and more flexible opening hours.

Legal action over fim on children

BY HELEN JOHNSTONE

A LOCL authority is taking legal aon against Channel 4 and a pduction company, alleging at the makers of a fly-on-the-all documentary encourag children in care to act illelly for the camera.

Filmrews are accused of settingp shots by asking vulnerablchildren to portray themsees as homeless. One 15-yearld girl in care was allegedlyasked to solicit in a city cere and others allegedly bre bail conditions to take pe in the film.

Notgham City Council said yerday that it was taking le action after months of negations with Channel 4 hacbroken down. The move,hich is being backed by Noinghamshire police, is aimed stopping the producers ofie documentary, October Fns, from making contact wi and filming children in theuncil's care. If successful, the action will also stop Channel 4 from screening parts of the documentary featuring the children and compel the company to hand over material relating to them.

Concern over the documentary, which has been two years in the making, emerged last year when a film crew was allegedly caught on closed-circuit television handing blankets to children as young as 12 then leading them to Nottingham city centre to film them begging.

It was also alleged that a 14-year-old boy on bail and a 13-year-old girl on the child protection register were taken by train to Skegness, breaking their curfew.

Channel 4 and October Films admit failing to seek permission to interview the youngsters but deny offering them inducements to appear on film or setting up shots.

Yemen stalls Yard's inquiry into kidnap

Police from Britain and the US are being hampered by the authorities, reports **Daniel McGrory** in Sanaa

FOUR Scotland Yard detectives were last night struggling to carry out their investigation into the group behind the kidnapping of 16 western tourists as Yemeni authorities continue *to hinder their inquiries.*

The Yard's Anti-Terrorist Squad officers and ten FBI agents are being followed everywhere they go in the Yemeni capital. They are forbidden to talk to people about the kidnappings by the al-Jihad group or the series of bomb plots uncovered in Yemen.

The FBI and Yard teams must spend most of the day in *their hotel and inform* Yemen's Political Security Organisation of their whereabouts at all times. Local security chiefs fear that the detectives may uncover *links with international* terrorist groups that are rumoured to have connections to Yemen.

Diplomats were demanding last night that Sanaa keep its original promise to let the investigators question Abu Hassan, the leader of the kidnap gang, whom authorities plan to execute soon.

They also want to see three men *arrested in Aden, who allegedly* confessed to plotting bomb attacks on a series of targets there, which included the British Consulate and an Anglican church.

Yemeni *officials say that* two of the men, of Pakistani origin, had planned the bombings of five American and British targets from their base in London.

All three claim to be British citizens. British diplomats want to check the UK passports the three were using to enter Yemen, but have still not seen *the documents, nor been* able to talk to them.

There were a series of urgent meetings in Sanaa yesterday to try to rescue the inquiry into who funded and trained both the kidnappers and the alleged bombers, and the links believed to exist between the two groups.

One excuse given by Yemeni authorities for not allowing the police to see Hassan is that the 28-year-old refuses to talk to the Yard.

The strained relations with Whitehall worsened further yesterday after two detectives *were expelled from Aden, and* there are hints that Britain may impose diplomatic sanctions against Yemen. These could include a ban on visas for travel and a cutback in aid and investment.

Diplomats expressed concern last night for a party of 12 British tourists who had ignored Foreign Office advice and who were travelling along the road on *which* Hassan staged his ambush. Yemeni authorities withdrew military escorts from touring parties even after the discovery of the bomb plot in Aden on December 23, five days before the kidnap.

There is also growing irritation at how the Yemenis are conducting the hunt for the escaped kidnappers. Security *forces did not raid Hassan's* home village until five days after the botched hostage rescue.

Tribesmen from the village of al-Hajer, 180 kilometres north of Aden, said that known associates of Hassan left their hideouts in the mountains of *Shabwa* province hours after the surviving hostages were freed. *Security* sources in Aden said that they had rounded up "a considerable number of suspects", but refused to say how many.

They also claimed to have shut down the al-Jihad's main *training camp at Hatat, but* residents of the remote mountain *town said that there had* been no raid. Scotland Yard officers in London said that they did not know how long they were prepared to allow their detectives to stay in Yemen.

As efforts continued last *night to repair the rift with* Sanaa, the Labour MP Keith *Vaz said that a senior Cabinet* figure should visit Yemen to resolve the crisis.

Mr Vaz, who was born in Aden, said that he would be willing to go to Sanaa to help to obtain permission for the Yard officers to conduct their inquiry.

PUPILS APPLAUD HOSTAGE SURVIVOR

Sue Mattocks, 43, one of the surviving *hostages, was applauded by pupils* yesterday on her first day back at Clarendon House Girls' Grammar School in Ramsgate, Kent, where she is head of religious studies. She was one of the first teachers in school for the start of the day and was given permission to take assembly. Jane Bennett, the head teacher, said: "She spoke about her time in the Yemen and how she was glad to be back. She also asked us to remember that there were four families in grief." Becky Gosden, 15, one of pupils, *said*: "She is one of the best teachers at *school. It is great to have her back.*"

An American tourist watches an election rally in Sanaa, where British detectives are largely confined to their hot

Efforts to uncover truth expose a rift that stems from civil war

Aden's lingering resentment of north lies behind moves to hinder investigation, writes **Michael Binyon**

A CLEAR rift has opened up between the Yemeni Government and the authorities in Aden over the investigation into the hostage killings.

The decision in Aden to expel *two Scotland Yard detectives* on Tuesday has exposed tensions between the authorities in the south and the Government in the capital, Sanaa. The confusion appears to *reflect the lingering resentment in* Aden and south Yemen to the Government in Sanaa, which defeated the *breakaway south* after a bitter two-month civil war in 1994.

Victor Henderson, the British Ambassador, yesterday had another round of talks with the Yemeni Interior Minister, who promised extensive co-operation.

The Foreign Office believes that the order expelling the two Scotland Yard officers from Aden was a mix-up, not reflecting government policy. But if the Aden authorities are *defying the Interior Ministry's* promise of help, this could make the official investigation into the killings impossible.

Officially the Scotland Yard detectives in Sanaa have been *told* that they can return to Aden whenever they want and interview whomever they wish.

The Foreign Office yesterday dismissed as *ridiculous reports* that they might not be allowed to interview the suspects because they are Muslims. "In any case, we too have Muslim police," a spokesman said.

A bigger complication comes with reports that some of the suspects may *hold* British passports, which would entitle them to a visit and British consular advice. If they also held Yemeni citizenship, however, Britain would have no consular right to see them.

About 2,000 people are believed to *hold* British passports in Yemen, most of them Yemenis with dual nationality. The Foreign Office said it was *still* unclear who the kidnappers were or what were *their* motives. "They could be connected to outside powers and people such as Usama bin Laden, or this could be purely a local, tribal affair," a spokesman said.

Mr Henderson was cordially received yesterday by Yemeni officials, who still say they are keen for Britain to establish the full facts of the case.

The British Embassy has meanwhile denied any change in policy towards Yemen's attempt to join the Commonwealth after a diplomatic furore erupted over the killing of the hostages. It issued a statement confirming that Yemen's request had been under review by all members *of the* Commonwealth since 1997.

هكذا من الأصل

US 'used UN arms team to spy on Iraqis'

BY JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK AND MICHAEL BINYON

A FEUD between top United Nations officials and UN weapons inspectors broke into open warfare yesterday when aides to Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, accused the United States of misusing a UN intelligence-gathering system to spy on President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

The allegations, echoing longstanding Baghdad complaints, focused on an electronic eavesdropping operation codenamed "Shake the Tree" and established by the UN Special Commission (Unscom) in early 1996 to thwart Iraqi efforts to conceal banned weapons of mass destruction.

While Mr Annan was on holiday, unnamed aides were quoted as saying that he had "convincing evidence" that Unscom helped the Americans to collect intelligence to destabilise the Iraqi regime. "The Secretary-General has become aware of the fact that Unscom directly facilitated the creation of an intelligence collection system for the US in violation of its mandate," one adviser told *The Washington Post*. "The UN cannot be party to an operation to overthrow one of its member states."

The charges appeared to be part of a bureaucratic battle over the future of weapons inspections after last month's US-British airstrikes on Iraq. They sparked a denial by Richard Butler, chief UN weapons inspector, and were disowned by Mr Annan's office. "We not only have no convincing evidence of these allegations, we have no evidence of any kind," said Mr Annan's spokesman.

"Shake the Tree" dates back to a 1996 decision by weapons inspectors to pursue the "concealment mechanism" by which Iraq's security services and elite military units hid components and documents for weapons programmes. UN inspectors set up electronic surveillance to monitor mobile phones and walkie-talkies. The system, originally run from the UN monitoring centre in Baghdad, meant that inspectors learnt immediately of Iraq's evasion attempts. British and Israeli personnel helped to interpret data.

Scott Ritter, the former UN inspector who ran the "concealment" inspections, told *The Boston Globe* that "Shake the Tree" was run by Unscom until March 1998. Then, after Mr Annan negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding with Saddam, the US pressed Britain and Israel to withdraw support and took over the operation. By last July the system had reportedly been automated so the US could monitor Iraqi communications after inspectors had left the country.

Mr Butler denied relinquishing control of "Shake the Tree" to America, and he rejected charges that Unscom was helping it to destabilise Iraq.

The 20,000-tonne British aircraft carrier *Invincible* will sail for the Gulf on Saturday to join British and US forces deployed there, the Ministry of Defence said yesterday.



AFP / AWAD

An Iraqi soldier, anticipating further airstrikes, mans an anti-aircraft gun in Basra

WORLD IN BRIEF

Pilot protest adds to Olympic woes

Athens: A work-to-rule by Olympic Airways pilots demanding regular overtime pay has cast a cloud over the airline's survival (John Carr writes). The management says routes may have to be cut to maintain basic operations. Earlier this week hundreds of Athens-bound passengers at Heathrow and Orly, Paris, fumed as the work-to-rule added to delays. A London-Athens flight last Sunday overflew a scheduled stop at Salonika when the pilot refused to fly into overtime. On arrival at Athens, angry passengers who should have disembarked at Salonika, briefly confined the pilots in the cockpit.

19,000 flee rebel clash

Kabezi, Burundi: Clashes between rebels and government forces near the Burundian-capital have left dozens of people dead and displaced nearly 19,000, officials said. Since fighting intensified early last month, all 10,932 residents of the Mubone commune, and 8,000 residents of the neighbouring Kabezi commune, have fled their homes. *(AP)*

Tasteless sweetmeats



Tel Aviv: Bags of confectionery containing portraits of Adolf Hitler and Nazi swastikas, right, are on sale in Israel, *Yediot Aharonot* reported. The Tofita sweets, imported from Turkey, come wrapped in portraits of dictators, including Hitler and Iraq's President Saddam Hussein. David Bisso, the importer, said that he had received complaints about the Hitler pictures from Nazi death camp survivors. *(AFP)*

Genocide films 'lost'

Phnom Penh: More than 1,000 hours of film that could help to frame genocide charges against Khmer Rouge leaders are missing and might have been sold, the head of Cambodia's genocide documentation centre said. The films comprise virtually the entire domestic archive of films made during the 1975-1979 Khmer Rouge regime. *(Reuters)*

32-year silence broken

Hanoi: Pain during an operation on his abscessed foot led Truong Van Xa, 32, to speak for the first time. Mr Xa, a deaf mute, had had a local anaesthetic, but when the doctor at Binh Dinh Provincial Hospital made an incision, he screamed, adding: "Oh my gosh, it's so painful." His vocabulary has grown since, but his hearing is still impaired. *(AFP)*

Fury at Israeli car clampdown

Jerusalem: Britain and Israel were involved in a diplomatic clash yesterday when Israeli police removed cars owned by Palestinian staff from outside the British consulate-general in east Jerusalem (Christopher Walker writes).

British officials made formal complaints to the Israeli Foreign Ministry. According to British diplomats, three cars were seized from Palestinian and Israeli Arab staff employed at the consulate-general despite remonstrations from British officials.

The Israelis claim the cars will be sold unless their owners pay income tax owed to the Israeli authorities.

British officials claimed that the action was in breach of an informal agreement reached with Israel in March 1980, when it was decided that Palestinian employeees at the various consulates in east Jerusalem would not have to pay taxes to a Government which most states, including Britain, regard as an occupying military force.



Lipkin-Shahak: poll entry



Netanyahu faced with centre party challenge

Jerusalem: Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, the former Israeli Chief of Staff, yesterday announced his bid for Prime Minister as head of a new centre party that he said would create a "political revolution" in the Jewish state (Christopher Walker writes). In a strong challenge to Binyamin Netanyahu, the present Prime Minister, Mr Lipkin-Shahak said his new party would replace the "entrenched and outmoded ideas" of the ruling right-wing Likud Party, and of Labour, which has been in opposition since 1996.

Off-road cars come adrift in US snow

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

AS THE death toll rises in the Midwest's great blizzard, misery has come even to the once-proud owners of gleaming four-wheel drive vehicles. The hottest American car fad in years, "all-terrain" vehicles — used mainly as suburban runabouts — have met their first real test of strength with Mother Nature. And they are floundering in snowdrifts by the thousand.

Chicago's worst blizzard in 30 years continued yesterday, with fresh layers falling on the 2ft of snow that has crippled the city since the weekend despite round-the-clock bulldozing by more than 700 snowploughs. Ninety-one deaths have been blamed on the storm, and upwardly mobile professionals who thought themselves immune have been humbled by wrecked transmissions and broken axles in cars they thought would take them anywhere.

"We are in crisis mode and a big part of the problem is four-wheel drive owners who don't know what they're doing," a receptionist at the A-1 Towing Service in suburban Chicago said. Sport utility vehicles have flooded the US market over the past five years, generating huge profits for manufacturers and dealers and earning the fury of environmentalists because, as "light trucks", they are not subject to the same emissions standards as smaller cars. European companies including Mercedes have joined a stampede led by Ford and Chevrolet to equip the family with machines that dwarf more traditional estate cars. They are sold as the perfect way to conquer the wilderness, often in leather-upholstered luxury.

Yet many owners have been left frustrated and out of pocket this week. Often it is the driver that is the problem. "A four-wheel drive is not a tank, and even a tank can get stuck," Trent Riddle, Editor of a specialist off-road magazine told *The Wall Street Journal*.

Towing companies from Illinois to New York State were being called out by novices buried in snow. Even the mightiest names in the off-road business suffered casualties: One suburban Chicago dealership towed in a Range Rover and two Land Rovers with transmissions burnt out because drivers kept spinning their wheels.

The blizzard blanketing much of the central United States has brought record temperatures from Detroit to Disney World in Florida. Most storm deaths have been in traffic accidents, but at least a dozen reported have been elderly people collapsing after shovelling snow.

The most poignant victim was a still-born baby found in a shawl and frozen solid on the steps of a Chicago church.

Sixteen more inches of snow were expected in Buffalo, New York, yesterday — the unofficial snow capital of the United States. Further west, some air passengers have been stranded since New Year's Day because of chaos in the regional air hubs of Chicago and Detroit. For most, driving home has not been an option.



Firemen in Buffalo, where more than a foot of snow fell yesterday, work to clear the city's streets and fire hydrants

Olympics chief hit by gifts scandal

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

JUAN Antonio Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee and custodian of its good name, has fallen under the cloud of its latest bribery scandal amid claims that he received gifts worth six times the committee's self-imposed maximum.

In 1995, a week before the IOC awarded the 2002 Winter Olympics to Salt Lake City, Señor Samaranch received two Browning guns worth $1,000 (£615), the Utah-based gunmaker has confirmed. Committee members may accept gifts from potential sponsors up to $150 in value.

The twist in the Salt Lake City scandal involves tiny sums next to the $400,000 in gifts that IOC members are said to have received in all, but it is the first involving Señor Samaranch directly and comes less than a month after he vowed to oust any colleague guilty of corruption.

Utah's 30 year-old dream of hosting the winter games is rapidly turning into a nightmare. What had been touted as a $3 billion bonanza for the state is now the object of four separate corruption inquiries, including one by the FBI. This week Mike Leavitt, Utah's Republican Governor, issued a stinging rebuke to those who backed the Salt Lake City bid and are now accused of funneling perks to IOC members in return for their votes.

The Olympic movement's worst fear is that the Salt Lake City allegations may be exposed as the tip of an iceberg.


Ileana de la Guardia: father was executed

Castro is target of French lawsuit

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FIDEL CASTRO has joined General Augusto Pinochet of Chile as the target of international legal action after a French lawyer filed a lawsuit in Paris yesterday against the Cuban President, accusing him of crimes against humanity, torture, drug-trafficking and illegal detention.

Serge Lewisch demanded that Señor Castro face prosecution for the 1989 execution by firing squad of a government official, Colonel Antonio de la Guardia, on charges of smuggling drugs to America.

Acting on behalf of De la Guardia's daughter, Ileana, M Lewisch claimed that the colonel was one of several scapegoats punished to deflect suspicion from Señor Castro himself during a drugs scandal. M Lewisch also accused President Castro of the arbitrary imprisonment of a French journalist and photographer in the 1970s.

Senate leaders seek quick fix

By Damian Whitworth
in Washington

WITH President Clinton's impeachment trial set to open today, there was no clear idea last night of the format or length of the historic proceedings. Chaos reigned in Washington as Republicans and Democrats struggled to agree on a way to avoid a long trial that could paralyse the capital for months.

White House and Democrat hopes that the trial would be over quickly appeared to be disappearing as conservative Republicans dug in their heels and insisted on a longer trial with witnesses that could include Monica Lewinsky.

There is general agreement that, unless there is a new bombshell about Mr Clinton's relations with the former trainee, the required two thirds of the 100-member Senate will not convict him on the impeachment charges and force him from office.

With this in mind, and acutely aware that the public is fed up with the whole scandal, Trent Lott, the Republican Senate majority leader, had proposed a "mini-trial" lasting just a few days next week, avoiding witnesses and likely to end with a vote to abort the proceedings and rebuke the President with a motion of censure. However, the fury of members of his own party forced him to engage in round-the-clock meetings yesterday to try to find a new format that will keep enough of both sides happy.

There are 55 Republicans and 45 Democrats in the Senate and a simple majority of 51 could vote at any time to end the trial abruptly. It seemed that Mr Lott was working towards a compromise on his compromise — a trial of two to three weeks that would aim to call a limited number of witnesses.

"I think we are beginning to get an idea of how we can do this that will be fair to all," said Mr Lott. "It may be that nobody will like it, but I want to do it where everybody feels that they can get their fair shot and get to a vote on the articles at the conclusion of that. It is a delicate balancing act."

Henry Hyde, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee who is leading the prosecution team that will lay two articles of impeachment, referring to grand jury perjury and obstruction of justice, before the Senate, insists that witnesses be called. Tom Daschle, leader of the Senate Democrats, said his party was "not prepared to accept any witnesses".

The White House is continuing with its preparations on the basis that the President faces a full-scale trial in which Ms Lewinsky might be asked to give detailed accounts of her sexual relationship with him. It has remained quiet about the process, but has let it be known that, once witnesses are called, it will mount a comprehensive defence of Mr Clinton that could include questioning the constitutional basis of the trial and calling its own witnesses.

Such actions could ensure that the trial is spun out for months. Mr Lott, who fears that a lengthy trial could anger the public and damage Republican prospects for elections in 2000, shuttled from meeting to meeting to try to reach a consensus on how the trial should go forward.

Fabulous laugh, page 21

J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE, AP



President Clinton, supported by Vice-President Gore, welcomes a projected budget surplus yesterday on the eve of his impeachment hearing

Democracy overwhelms spirit of 1789

COMMENTARY
TIM HAMES

It has been described by one respected Senator as "... *not the trial of the century* ... it is more important than that, I think ... it is the trial of all time".

When the Senate trial of President Clinton opens today, much of it will be cast in the language of the American Constitution and towering figures such as George Washington and James Madison — the men responsible for that text.

The Senate leadership has struggled to establish trial rules that might allow for it to be dealt with smoothly and swiftly. In fairness, it is hardly surprising they have found it so difficult to reach agreement on procedure.

The *American Constitution*, ratified in 1789, is (with the partial exception of the Massachusetts state constitution of 1780) the oldest working document of its kind on the planet. It is also easily the shortest.

This passion for brevity extends to impeachment. It states simply that the Senate has the sole power to try impeachments, it must do so under oath, the Chief Justice shall preside if the President is in the dock, and a two-thirds majority is required for conviction. After that, the Senate is on its own.

These limited terms of reference proved inconvenient *when, in 1868, the Senate* had to conduct the first trial of a President, Andrew Johnson. In haste, 26 rules were devised. They remain, largely unaltered, the basic structure for impeachment trials. The 131-year-old regulations will serve as Chief Justice William Rehnquist's only handbook.

The political context of impeachment has altered enormously since 1789 and 1868, rendering those precedents close to irrelevant. The men who drafted the Constitution had a limited enthusiasm for democracy. They proposed that only the House of Representatives *should* emerge from direct election. The Senate was to consist of wise statesmen selected by state legislatures and, therefore, kept at a strict distance from mass opinion. The President was to emerge from an electoral college which, they assumed, would consist of wise elites sent from states. It was, ironically in the light of Bill Clinton's poll numbers, to protect Presidents from the voters that the Founding Fathers made the Upper House the final arbiter on impeachment.

It was thought that the House of Representatives, serving the sentiment of the mob, *might* occasionally seek to remove a President it *had not been allowed to* elect for short-term or political reasons.

By Johnson's trial the electoral college had become one of the "dignified" aspects of the Constitution, a device that endorsed what a popular election had determined. President Johnson was an accidental White House occupant, elevated by Abraham Lincoln's assassination and representatives had few qualms about throwing him out.

The 1868 Senate was still selected from state legislatures. But its members all too often consisted *of sad bores sent to* Washington by state politicians wanting rid of them. This bunch, after a 74-day trial, acquitted Johnson.

The Clinton trial is thus unique. Not only has this President been elected, but the Senate he faces today has altered since the 1860s. From the passage of the 17th Amendment to the Constitution in 1913 it, like the House of Representatives, has been elected directly.

Paradoxically, the introduction of democracy has elevated the standing of the chamber and produced something much closer (by the standards of politicians) *to the collection of independ*ent and intelligent souls that Washington and Madison had hoped the original Constitution would foster.

Judge's role of a lifetime

From Bronwen Maddox
in Washington

THE trial of President Clinton will begin when Chief Justice William Rehnquist, wearing a black robe with three gold stripes on the sleeves, crosses the narrow street between the Supreme Court and the Capitol and takes his seat on the Senate rostrum.

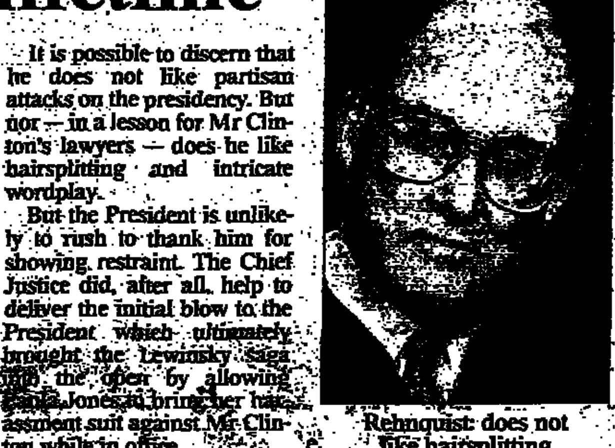
Pundits haggle about whether this is the trial of the century, but they are agreed that, for the 74-year-old Chief Justice, this is the role of a lifetime.

An austere, reserved man, often described as professorial, no one questions that he will be well prepared. In 1992 he published *Grand Inquests*, a 278-page history of the 19th-century impeachment trials of President Andrew Johnson and Justice Samuel Chase. Never a bestseller, and long out of print, his text will be urgently reissued in paperback next week, *following* a torrent of inquiries.

But those looking for clues about his handling of the Clinton trial will find his opinions leak out at a trickle.

It is possible to discern that he does not like partisan attacks on the presidency. But nor — in a lesson for Mr Clinton's lawyers — does he like hairsplitting and intricate wordplay.

But the President is unlikely to rush to thank him for showing restraint. The Chief Justice did, after all, help to deliver the initial blow to the President which ultimately brought the Lewinsky saga into the open by allowing Paula Jones to bring her harassment suit against Mr Clinton while in office.



Rehnquist: does not like hairsplitting

Silence in court

"HEAR YE! Hear Ye! Hear Ye! All persons are required to keep silence, on pain of imprisonment, while the House of Representatives is exhibiting the articles of impeachment."

With these words from the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate the trial of President Clinton is expected to open today (Damian Whitworth writes). That the first trial of a president in *130 years will be silent* is one of the few certainties about the proceedings.

The 100 senators are acting as a jury and will be required to sit quietly at their desks on the floor of the Senate. Even their questions to the prosecution, defence and any witnesses must be written and handed to the Chief Justice William Rehnquist who will preside.

Strom Thurmond, 96, the Senate president *pro-tempore*, will recognise the 13 members of the House of Representatives, who will prosecute the President.

Mr Rehnquist will give the oath to the Senate and swear in the 100 members. With the formalities over, that should be it for the day. What happens next is anybody's guess.







£100m boost to Aids fight

FROM JILL SHERMAN IN PRETORIA

A £100 million programme to fight Aids worldwide will be announced by Tony Blair tomorrow, the bulk of the funds destined for South Africa and other African countries.

The Prime Minister will give further details of the three-year British grant when he visits the Nazareth House Orphanage in Cape Town, where most of the children are HIV positive or have Aids.

Officials said the money would go towards the United Nations Aids Programme and to projects to help special victims such as those at Nazareth House. They said that there are now 33.4 million people infected with HIV in the world and that 70 per cent are in Africa.

More than 80 per cent of all deaths from Aids have occurred in Africa, and 10 per cent of existing and new cases now occur in South Africa where the disease has reduced life expectancy by 20 years.

Women between 15 and 25 are one of the highest risk groups, and without effective action soon there could be two million orphans infected with HIV in South Africa.

Blair backs Mbeki as heir apparent

Britain wants to reassure whites they are safe in the ANC's hands, Sam Kiley writes from Pretoria

TONY BLAIR hopes to boost the image of Thabo Mbeki among whites and big business during his first tour to South Africa this week.

Mr Mbeki, the anointed successor to Nelson Mandela, has sparked fears among many whites that they face an uncertain future after elections later this year.

Members of Mr Blair's entourage and British diplomats in Pretoria confirmed yesterday that Mr Blair hoped that his appearances alongside Mr Mbeki, and only a courtesy call on Mr Mandela, would "send a clear signal that we are confident about the transition".

"We are here to say to everybody, including the whites and all businessmen, that we think that South Africa is firmly on the right track. The appearance of the British Prime Minister alongside the Deputy President, Mr Mbeki, will send an unmistakable signal to those who might be considering leaving the country," said one official.

Mr Blair echoed these sentiments on the flight from his holiday in the Seychelles to Pretoria, where he landed yesterday at the start of his three-day tour of South Africa.

Britain is the country's largest trading partner, exporting £2.4 billion a year and importing £1.9 billion worth of South African products. In addition, Britain recently announced a £4 billion investment scheme as part of a deal to sell arms to Pretoria.

There are clearly economic interests at the heart of the British delegation. But Mr Blair and his advisers have also recognised that Mr Mbeki, 57, a small, affable technocrat, has also recently "put the wind up whites" after twice stating that they enjoyed far too much of South Africa's wealth and had done very little to assist in the "transformation" of his country from an apartheid state to democracy.

Thabo is the son of Govan Mbeki, a fellow Robben Island prisoner and close friend of Mr Mandela. Thabo Mbeki went into exile in 1962, shortly before his father was jailed. He studied economics by correspondence with London University, and took an MA at Sussex University in 1966. By 1970 he was receiving military training in the Soviet Union, and was soon serving Oliver Tambo, the then ANC president, as his assistant, a break which swiftly took him on to the ANC's national executive.

Facing elections in May or June, Mr Mbeki's African National Congress has begun to try to turn voters' attention away from a failure to deliver on extravagant promises of social and economic improvements made five years ago to focus on racial issues. His ministers have insisted on racial quotas in national sports teams and pushed Bills through parliament requiring employers to reflect the racial profile of the country in their workforce.

Last year thousands of white professionals, and some of their black colleagues, joined an increasing brain drain of skilled workers leaving South Africa either because of crime, the most often cited reason, or because of a lack of faith in the long-term goals of the ANC. They left at an average of about 800 a month.

"There is concern that South Africa's whites should not only not be running away, but encouraging foreign investment. That is one of the reasons that Mr Blair has come to South Africa," a member of his staff said. Cementing firm relations between London and Pretoria has been seen as such a high priority that Downing Street openly refers to Mr Mbeki as the "President-in-waiting".

"There is no doubt that the ANC will win the next election, and no doubt that Mr Mbeki as the president of the party and Deputy President of the country, will be elected. It is therefore important for us to pay our respects to Mr Mandela, one of the great figures of the age, before he leaves office, and to cement the relationship with Mr Blair," a British official said.

☐ **Embassy protest:** Tempers flared at a protest by right-wing Afrikaners at the British Embassy in Pretoria yesterday when demonstrators manhandled and insulted a lone British woman who was carrying a Union flag to show her support for Mr Blair's visit. She was uninjured. The demonstrators were demanding an apology from Britian for pain and suffering during the Anglo-Boer war of 1899 to 1902. *(AFP)*

Leading article, page 23

NET LINKS

www.inc.co.za/ — South African Independent online
www.anc.org.za/sanet.html — South African Internet Resources, many useful links including business, government and newspapers.
www.bibim.com/anc/ — ANC news briefings, compilations from South African press agencies.

ODD ANDERSEN / AFP





Cherie Blair is greeted by a child as she and Tony Blair arrived in South Africa yesterday

UN staff flee rebel battle for heart of Freetown

Insurgents set capital ablaze, report Sam Kiley and Our Foreign Staff

PANIC gripped Sierra Leone's capital yesterday as rebels entered the city killing civilians suspected of being government supporters and bombarding Nigerian-led west African peacekeeping troops defending President Kabbah.

The entire United Nations expatriate staff in Sierra Leone was reported last night to be at the airport awaiting evacuation to the Guinean capital, Conakry. Several government ministers were also present at Lungi airport, some 12 miles from Freetown, but said they did not intend to leave.

The rebels captured the State House, the symbolic seat of government. They also burned down the Nigerian High Commission, the city's main police station, and the special branch headquarters.

One unconfirmed report said prisoners, including scores of rebels, had been freed from the city's Pademba Road and New England prisons.

Sierra Leonean soldiers and forces of the Nigerian-led intervention force, Ecomog, that has been fighting the rebels were nowhere to be seen, witnesses said. The Government warned people to stay indoors. "Anybody found in the street from now on will be considered to be a rebel and shot," said Julius Spencer, Information Minister.

Gun battles and artillery volleys rang out through the city's abandoned streets. Reinforcements and additional supplies were being dispatched to Freetown from Nigeria, a Nigerian military official said on condition of anonymity.

Earlier in the day, thousands of people fled to the centre of Freetown after a two-hour barrage on the outskirts of the city. The civilians, fleeing on foot and in vehicles, retreated after the onset of firing from an industrial area about six miles from Freetown.

The rebel force, which has been accused of widespread atrocities, including the murder and torture of countless villagers, as well as cannibilism, launched a renewed offensive in December. It has swept through several towns in the east and north of the country since then.

President Kabbah was deposed in a coup in May 1997 by a military junta allied with the rebels. Soldiers from the intervention force restored him to power in February last year.

Since then, the insurgents have been rebuilding, strengthened by defections from Sierra Leone's military and mercenaries from Liberia. Among those who may have been freed from Freetown's prisons yesterday were members of the junta ousted last February, dozens of whom were sentenced to death on treason charges.

It was not known whether the Front's nominal leader, Foday Sankoh, was in Pademba Road when the rebels stormed it. Rumours were circulating earlier in the week that he had been transferred to another jail.

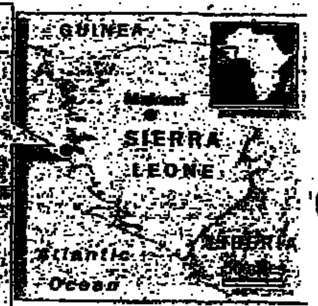
By midday yesterday the Government said Ecomog was in control of the situation in Freetown, and that troops were "mopping up" all rebel resistance.

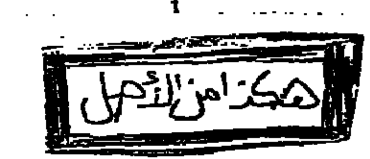
Meanwhile, in an interview with BBC radio, a man calling himself Colonel Sesay, who claimed to be phoning from the State House, said his 15,000 men met "no Ecomog soldiers on their way to the capital".

By late afternoon, neither the whereabouts of Mr Kabbah nor his arch enemy Mr Sankoh was known. The Front rebels had demanded the release of Mr Sankoh as a condition to holding negotiations with the Government.

A United Nations official in Freetown said the rebels were "truly monstrous". "They are now forcing large numbers of able-bodied men and women into their own ranks after brief training," he said. "There is real panic on the streets though I think that Ecomog will be able to beat them off."







Santer defies corruption censure threat

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

JACQUES SANTER yesterday threw up a defensive wall around his beleaguered European Commission and vowed to stay in office even if a majority of the European Parliament votes next week to sack the executive for failing to curb corruption and other abuses.

In a defiant and emotional appearance, the Commission President flatly rejected charges from MEPs and the media that he and his 19 colleagues had mismanaged tens of millions of pounds and had tolerated the cover-up of fraud. He attacked a Dutch Commission official who was suspended last month for blowing the whistle on corruption, and ridiculed as nonsense press reports that his wife was under investigation over a property deal in Luxembourg.

In a move driven by centre-right and Green discontent, the Parliament is to vote next week on a censure motion that could force the resignation of the whole Commission. The two-thirds majority required by the Maastricht treaty for this move is thought highly unlikely, but the Parliament's anger is running so high that a smaller majority is possible. This would still be a significant blow to the credibility of Mr Santer, whose team has a year left in office.

Mr Santer acknowledged that there had been errors but



Santer: Parliament's campaign "intolerable"

insisted that the Commission had clamped down. He denounced the Parliament's campaign as intolerable for the executive when the EU was in vital negotiations to reform its spending. He said the Commission would ignore anything short of a full censure vote. "As President of the Commission . . . I am committed to the working of the (EU) treaties and there is no other possibility," he said.

Mr Santer said the suspension of Paul van Buitenen, the junior finance official who delivered a mass of fraud evidence to the Parliament, was justified because he had broken all the rules despite being given a full hearing by his superiors. "This would not be tolerated in any administration in the world, nor in any private company."

The former Luxembourg Prime Minister also threw his weight behind Edith Cresson, the Education Commissioner, who has come under fire for abuses in her department and over her appointment of close associates to official posts.

In a glimpse of the political manoeuvring that is defusing the Parliament's move, Mr Santer has received backing from Pauline Green, the British Labour MEP who leads the Socialist group, the largest bloc in the assembly.

Alan Donnelly, leader of the big contingent of British Labour MEPs, called yesterday for a new system of scrutiny by the Parliament of spending. "Sacking the existing Commission is not the answer. But the next Commission has got to get it right," he said.

Mr van Buitenen, who is on half-pay pending an inquiry, handed his report to the Green group, which distributed it to the media last month. He listed what he said was evidence of bribery, misuse of funds, nepotism and a culture of cover-up at the Commission. The material contributed to a Parliament vote last month to rebuke the Commission by refusing to discharge its handling of the 1996 budget.

Jail for Paris jet-set pimp

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

A SOFT-PORN photographer was yesterday sentenced to five years in prison for running a prostitution ring catering to the international jet set.

Jean-Pierre Bourgeois, 51, was also ordered to pay damages of between Fr40,000 (about £4,300) and Fr120,000 to three young women who appeared as civil plaintiffs in the case — and one symbolic franc in damages to two others.

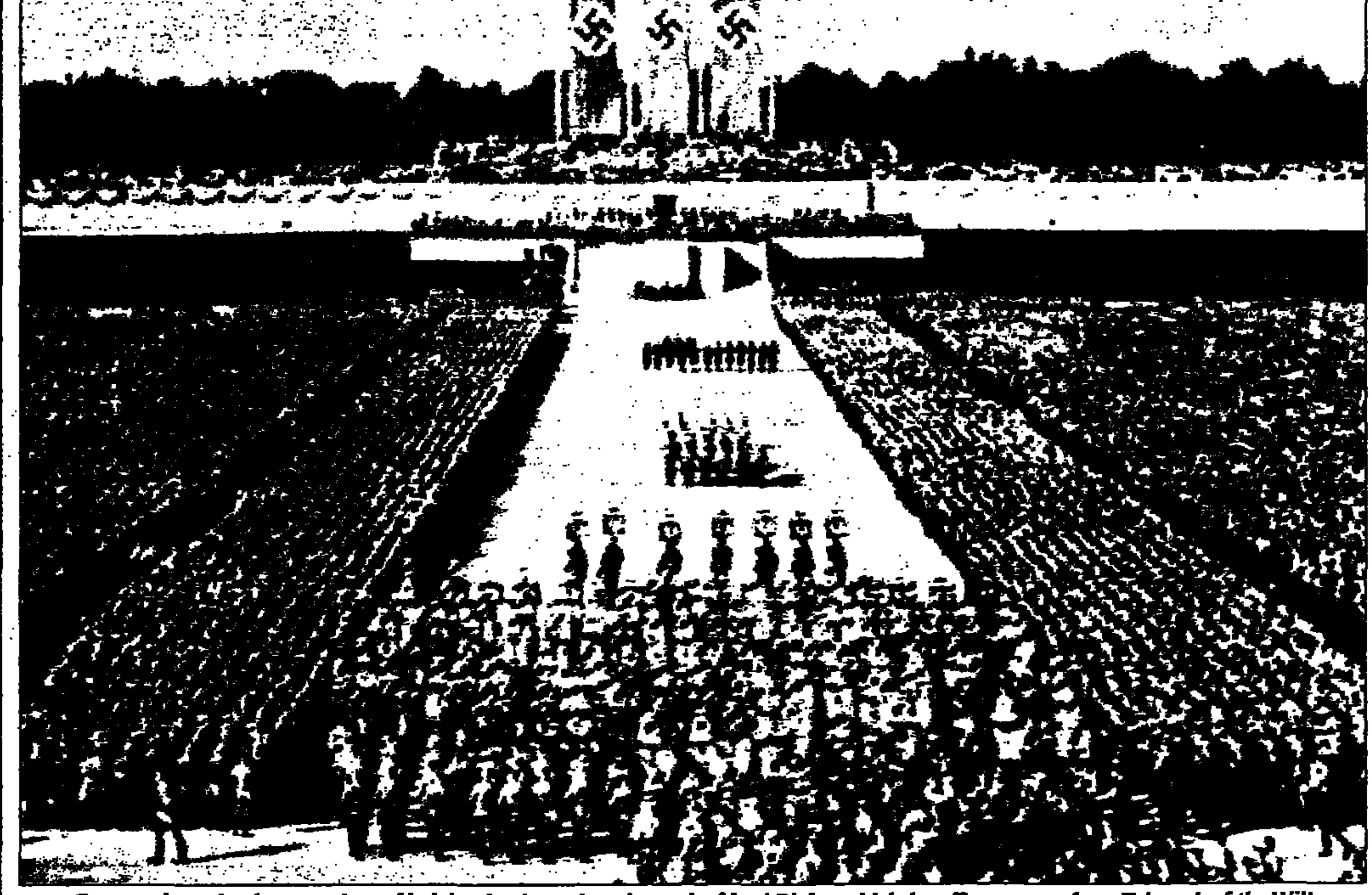
His co-defendant, Nazihabullatif al-Ladkhi, a Lebanese businessman who worked as a secretary to the Saudi royal family, was sentenced to 30 months in prison with 20 months suspended. He will be released, having spent the time in pre-trial detention.

A third man accused of recruiting women to the ring, Thomas Axell, a Swede, was fined Fr50,000, and another Swede, Janiena Torresdotter Necander, was cleared.

The convicted men were also ordered to pay Fr130,000 to an anti-prostitution group.

Prosecutors had demanded a six-year sentence for Bourgeois, who denied pimping charges alleging that he was a "sex maniac" who lured some 89 "naive young girls" into prostitution with promises of fame and fortune as models or actresses.

The call-girl ring was said to have provided women for international businessmen, Gulf dignitaries and figures in the entertainment industry.



THE KOBAL COLLECTION

Germans have the chance, at last, of judging for themselves the work of Leni Riefenstahl, below. Top: a scene from *Triumph of the Will*



Hitler's beloved film-maker comes in from the cold

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

LENI RIEFENSTAHL, Hitler's favourite film maker, is on the road to rehabilitation. The formidable 96-year-old who filmed *Triumph of the Will* — depicting Hitler as an almost divine presence addressing the 1934 Nazi party rally — and the 1936 Berlin Olympics has been shunned by Germans since the war.

Now, retrospectives of her work are opening in Potsdam and Cologne and many Germans are for the first time catching a glimpse of her controversial genius. The central question is whether Riefenstahl is a true artist or merely a gifted propagandist.

Leni Riefenstahl is still spry — though she was recently treated for pneumonia — and dedicates her time to underwater photography. This, and the filming of the primitive Nubian tribesmen, has been her artistic mission since the 1970s. However, her most important works — the films which determine whether she ranks in the pantheon of European directors — are *Triumph of the Will* and the two films that make up her Olympic documentary.

She had just turned 30 when she came to Hitler's notice. She had tried to escape the clutches of a tyranical father by becoming a dancer. A knee injury forced her to turn to acting and she became a star of the 1920s genre known as "mountain films". In 1931 she set up her own production company and directed her own mountain film.

Part of the venom against her must be that she is a woman and open to accusations that she had an exploitative love affair with Adolf Hitler.

Riefenstahl credibly denies this. Like many Germans, she says she found out about the extermination of the Jews only after the war was over. She was shown pictures of corpses and from that moment her love for Hitler turned to hatred.

She offered a more plausible explanation for her conduct: committed to independent film-making she needed protection from the very top to avoid party hack work.

The revolutionary technique used in *Triumph* — cameras running on tracks, subtle and spectacular lighting — were expanded for the 1936 Games. Watching this film, one is struck by its lack of aggressive propaganda.

Two hundred and fifty miles of film were shot. Riefenstahl cut it, edited it, controlled every frame. It remains her film, not Hitler's.

The mother of all splitting headaches



Dr Thomas Stuttaford reports on migraine; help for dyslexia; choking; flu and strokes; and personal stereos and hearing loss

Is your head throbbing on one side only? Is it made worse by every movement, by light, and does any noise make you want to crawl away and disappear? Do you lose your appetite, feel sick or even vomit? If you have this sort of pain, you are not alone in your misery — you have migraine.

One in ten adults in the UK suffers from migraine, and its cost to industry is immense. Half of all sufferers have to take time off with each attack; 30 per cent leave their office or factory to retire to bed. Only 20 per cent continue with their normal activities.

It is not only work that suffers. Some 30 per cent of people with migraine limit their social life for fear of an attack. The Prime Minister and the Home Secretary can take heart: pundits may decry the conflict between family holiday arrangements and the school term but, compared with the problems caused to children by migraine, these few days of absenteeism are as nothing.

Migraine usually starts in childhood or adolescence. In children, boys and girls are equally likely to suffer, but after puberty it is more than twice as common in women — and women sufferers have more frequent attacks. The average duration of an untreated attack is 24 hours, but for some unlucky people it may last for two or three days.

Migraine attacks are classified according to whether or not they are preceded by an aura: a visual disturbance which may take the form of flashing lights or blurring of part of the visual field.

The first measure to be taken in treatment is to avoid the triggers that may induce migraine. The nature of these triggers is determined genetically, but other factors dictate how easily an attack is brought on. Stress, and either too much or too little sleep, together with fatty meals, tea, coffee and alcohol, are the most common triggers.

In women, hormone levels can influence attacks. Menstrual migraine is a common problem and is defined as a migrainous headache which only occurs from two days before a period to three days after it.

Dr Charles Broomhead, one of a group of GPs, nurses and pharmacists known as MIPCA — Migraine in Primary Care Advisers Group — has studied the effect of exercise on migraine. A dramatic header in the goalmouth may make wonderful television, but it can also induce migraine in the soccer player. A football weighs 400g and when travelling at 30 miles an hour, it can distort the arteries at the base of the brain so that they go into spasm, causing a migraine. Any other sports in which the head is knocked, such as rugby and boxing, can also lead to migraine but so, surprisingly, can swimming, running and weight-training. Many skiers get violent migraines as a result of altitude.

If, despite avoiding trigger factors, the patient is having more than two attacks a month, long-term preventive medication is recommended. The choice includes beta-blockers and 5HT-antagonists such as Sanomigran (pizotifen) and Deseril (methysergide), but other preventive drugs are being introduced.

Many older remedies are still effective once an attack has started, but treatment has been revolutionised by the introduction of triptans. The first triptan was Imigran (sumatriptan), but there are now three others available which have certain advantages: Maxalt 10 (rizatriptan); Zomig (zolmitriptan) and Naramig (naratriptan). Imigran, however, can be taken by mouth, intranasally or by suppository.



Pure agony: the intense pain of migraine can be triggered by stress, tea, coffee, alcohol or a bump on the head

Help for Europe's dyslexic children

JACKIE STEWART has excelled as a racing driver and Olympic shot but is not afraid to admit that he cannot recite the alphabet, and may be caught out trying to spell the simplest words. At school his lack of literacy was a constant source of shame and embarrassment and he was forever having to devise means of glossing over his inadequacy.

Stewart was dyslexic, but although it may have undermined his education, it may also have been the spur that led to his later success. His foreword to the book *How to Detect and Manage Dyslexia*, by Philomena Ott, describes the humiliation he suffered when repeatedly paraded in front of the class and denigrated for being unable to read simple passages, or publicly penalised by being made to write 100 times "I will do my homework in future neatly and precisely". The staff may have acted out of ignorance but the taunts, giggles and suppressed laughter of his fellow pupils were, it is suggested, manifestations of the cruelty of children.

Unfortunately dyslexia, which is now accepted and understood in this country, is still little understood on the Continent, where doubtless any slowness in spelling and reading is attributed to such causes as "boys often develop later than girls". Although dyslexia has been recently redefined, the similar but older definition that it is a disorder in which children, despite adequate teaching and opportunity, fail to attain language skills of reading, writing and spelling commensurate with their intellectual abilities is perhaps easier to understand.

A group of parents, teachers and others interested in education have founded an organisation, ECIC (European Children in Crisis) to publicise the problems experienced by dyslexic expatriate children who need help to overcome a learning problem and, at the same time, compete in a classroom with contemporaries from a host of other nationalities.

Today, at the invitation of the Mayor of Brussels and in the presence of a multitude of dignitaries, ECIC is holding a reception in Brussels Town Hall to celebrate the launch of a multimedia training pack for pupils, parents and teachers to explain dyslexia. The pack is available initially in English, French and German, but other language versions will follow. The video, made with the help of the BBC, shows examples of dyslexic children and the problems they face in bilingual families in Europe or multilingual schools.

British parents of dyslexic children need not go to Brussels to learn more about their condition. The British Dyslexic Association has just produced a comprehensive guide, *The Dyslexia Handbook 1999*, which is essential reading for everybody, including doctors, who has an interest in this problem.

● How to Detect and Manage Dyslexia, *by Philomena Ott, Heinemann, £15.99;* The Dyslexia Handbook 1999, *£7, the British Dyslexic Association, 98 London Road, Reading RG1 5AU (helpline 0118 966 8271); ECIC, rue Defacqz 1, 1000 Brussels, Belgium (00 32 2 537 4836)*

Avoid choking to death

THE journal *GP* recently recounted the story of three-year-old Darren from Bury, Greater Manchester, who choked on a lollipop in his doctor's surgery. Fortunately the receptionist noticed that Darren's face had turned blue and that he was semi-conscious. A doctor immediately tried Heimlich's manoeuvre, in which the pit of a patient's abdomen is subjected to sharp pressure from the doctor's hands clasped over it. At the second attempt, the lollipop was ejected like a cork.

"What would have happened if the manoeuvre hadn't worked?" asks Dr Peter Standing, one of the other doctors in the practice. He suggests that all doctors should become familiar with the procedure of emergency laryngotomy, which involves making a hole in a patient's neck below the obstruction so that a tube may be inserted and breathing made possible.

The first step is to become familiar with the anatomy of the neck. The object is to locate a small gap between the thyroid cartilage — the Adam's apple — and the cricoid cartilage, about 3cm lower. A gauge 12 intravenous cannula can then be attached to a syringe and inserted at 45 degrees. Lo and behold, a lollipop-swallower can breathe again.

One place where it is now safe to choke is the Bury surgery. Doctors there have been practising with a pig's larynx, (very like the human larynx) bought at the local butcher's, under the eagle eye of their ear, nose and throat specialist.

Stresses of flu pose stroke risk

A CHARACTERISTIC of flu this year has been the nausea and vomiting that accompanies it. I recently met an old friend in whom this nearly led to disaster. She had had high blood pressure for many years but had treated it rather dismissively. However, after she had been sick 15-20 times in the day, her blood pressure must have risen to the point where it uncovered a weakness in her cerebral circulation. One of the blood vessels in her brain gave way and she collapsed unconscious.

The important lesson of this case is for the need to bring blood pressure down as low as possible so that ageing blood vessels are not pounded to destruction. The good news is that if a stroke occurs in someone who is hypertensive, it can be treated — their blood pressure can be lowered, although thereafter it will be a question of pills, to keep it at a safe level, for what should be a long life.

Further good news from the *British Medical Journal* is that even if the bleed, the small stroke, hadn't been induced by flu but was as a result of a congenital weakness in the arterial tree, no dramatic treatment would be needed. About 5 per cent of the population have little unruptured aneurysms — worn, bulging points in the cerebral arteries — but a study has shown that if they are very small, the rate of rupture is less than 0.05 per cent per year.

Conversely, 15.7 per cent of those who bravely ventured into surgery to deal with a small aneurysm had serious problems. If an aneurysm is larger than 10mm or situated at the junction of the internal carotid and posterior communicating artery, the risk of leaving it is greater.

Personal stereos and deafness

THERE may be a hitherto unrecognised link between Diana, Princess of Wales, and the slightly deaf French Army recruit whose loss of hearing makes him the source of his training sergeant's ire and the butt of other conscripts' jokes.

Three French doctors have been assessing the hearing of more than 1,100 army recruits aged 18 to 24. The research, published in *The Lancet*, centres on the relationship between hearing loss, exposure to noise and a history of ear infections in childhood. The doctors made certain that no recruit who had been subjected to recent noise was included in the trial.

The study confirms that young men who attend rock concerts and discothèques twice a month or more often suffer an appreciable hearing loss. Not surprisingly, this loss is not as great as that experienced by those who have had civilian occupations, which exposed them to noise for more than a six-month period. The connection between the late Princess and the French recruits was that the recruits who shared her fondness for a personal stereo were those most likely to suffer from hearing loss. Careful examination of the background of the recruits who had been appreciably deafened by their headsets showed that those who suffered had also had repeated ear infections during infancy and childhood. Personal stereo use did not influence the hearing of those who did not have otitis media when they were children.



Personal stereos can make hearing problems worse

The research by the military doctors from Clamart in France is important since it underlines the necessity of treating ear infections adequately in childhood. The child may not grow up to be a fan of pop music but he or she may be subjected to other persistent, heavy noise. Avoiding deafness may depend on an infection having been treated seriously some 30 years earlier.

Will Hillary have the last laugh?

President Clinton's Senate trial begins today. Will Hillary stick by him, or forge a political career alone? Here, Gail Sheehy reveals the childhood that made the First Lady a formidable fighter but left her addicted to an emotionally unavailable man

JUSTIN KERNOGHAN/PHOTOPRESS



Bill discovered her guttural laugh: it's fabulous — there's nothing held back. The public never sees that side of her. When she's laughing that's when she's free

THE FIGHTER
When Hillary was four her mother gave her licence to fight a girl who kept punching her: "There is no room in this house for cowards," Dorothy Rodham said. "The next time she hits you, I want you to hit her back."

This became the model for Hillary's operational style. "If I was going to war, I'd want her covering my rear. She's never going to run from a fight," says Congressman Jim McDermott, a Seattle psychiatrist who has insight into Hillary. "I would be more wary of challenging her than another member of Congress," he admitted.

"I wanted my children to be able to keep their equilibrium," Dorothy Rodham told me, explaining how she used a carpenter's level as a visual tool for instruction. She showed Hillary and her brothers the level with the bubble showing dead centre.

"Imagine having this carpenter's level inside you," she told them. "You try to keep that bubble in the centre. Sometimes it will go way here," she said, tipping the instrument to show how the bubble could drift, "and you have to bring it back."

It took a Hillary to raise a president. "Hillary taught him how to fight," says Carolyn Yeldell Staley, Bill's boyhood next-door neighbour from Hot Springs. Hillary tried to keep Bill on schedule. "I have to kick his ass every morning," she once told Susan McDougal, according to the late Jim McDougal, the Clintons' *Whitewater guru*. *Hillary* toughened him up.

HILLARY'S MOTHER
Hillary carefully censors what she says about Bill — even with her own mother. Dorothy Rodham does not grant interviews. She lives in a condominium in Little Rock co-owned by Hillary.

I was able recently to engage her *in a conversation*. "We don't get down and have those mother-daughter discussions about how she relates to her husband, her daughter or anything else as far as her personal life is concerned. We don't talk about deeply personal things."

Does Hillary feel pain very deeply? "Of course she does — she is a very sensitive person," Mrs Rodham said, her voice tightening. "But she is able not to over-emotionalise it. She doesn't go into one of these horribly overwrought kinds of tizzies. That's one thing I never did either."

A TOUGH FATHER
Hugh Rodham prided himself on having trained young naval recruits for combat during the Second World War and he used his old methods in raising his children. Hillary tellingly describes him as "a self-sufficient, tough-minded small businessman".

"When I brought home straight As from junior high," Hillary once wrote, "my father's only comment was 'Well Hillary, that must be an easy school you go to'." No matter how well she did, her father was always "raising the bar".

FOR THE LOVE OF BILL
When, in 1992, I asked the candidate's wife to name the most ecstatic experience of her twenties, she laughed and replied: "Falling in love with Bill Clinton ... He wasn't afraid of me."

He tapped into a part of Hillary that no one else ever had, says Betsey Wright, Clinton's Chief of Staff when he was the Governor of Arkansas. "*Everyone else saw her as* a terribly serious woman, very intense. He saw the side of her that liked spontaneity and laughter. He discovered her guttural laugh: it's fabulous — there's nothing held back. The public never sees that side of her. When she's laughing, that's when she's free."

Judith Hope, the chairwoman of the New York State Democratic Party, *organised* a big-tent event at the home of the actor-activists Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger in Amagansett. Bill Clinton turned to Hope after his wife had made a *speech* and *said with* a chuckle: "They really love her in New York. Maybe she should consider running for office in New York."

The crowd tensed as Hil*lary began to introduce the* President. She spoke of his deep commitment. He appeared to be moved. Then she turned to welcome "my husband, President Bill Clinton".

Clinton leapt up and grabbed her, not just a hug and air kiss, but a prolonged clinch. Hillary swooned. They fell into each other's arms.

At that moment Judith *Hope experienced an epiphany*: "He just keeps seducing this woman over and over again. This kind of chemistry can't be faked. She can't resist him." Hillary is addicted to *Bill*. "*That man would lie* down and kill himself before he would let her leave him," insists Betsey Wright. "There have been other temptations but Hillary is the love of his life."

"He's intimate only when he's seducing," says Dick Morris, a former Clinton strategist. But one-on-one, in terms of a real, intimate love relationship — such as a marriage — he backs away. He withholds.

A formerly close aide who was by Clinton's side in both public and private situations says: "He is emotionally unavailable. He lives on campaign junk love and casual sex — where no long-term commitment is required."

HER POLITICAL FUTURE
"Perhaps a myth had developed in their marriage that Bill Clinton was utterly detached from the practicalities of life and that she was good at it. *But aside from his philandering*," says a long-time ally, "almost every problem the guy got into — Whitewater, Travelgate, Filegate, the early appointments, how *she made money, cattle futures* — all that was Hillary. She is awful at this stuff. She is terrible. Almost the worst I have ever seen."

When Bill Clinton is influ*enced by his politically tone*-deaf wife, he falls flat.

"Handling White House operations wasn't what Hillary cared to do," concedes a top aide. Hillary's uncompro*mising style — an asset in the* courtroom — proved contrary to the craft of capital politics, where compromise is a necessity. She had a tin ear for how to sell her ideas. Betsey Wright *dismisses any idea that* Hillary would want an elective or appointive post.

"I don't think that she wants to be in Washington or in the thick of politics. I think *she wants a life*. Washington has been a cruel personal experience. It has taken a terrible personal toll."

HILLARY'S NEWS CENSORSHIP
One reason why Hillary is able to maintain her momentum is that she imposes a PG rating on the news digests that *her staff prepare for her* — no sex, no late-night talk-show gibes, no fact about the scandal that might distress or distract her. Hillary is not a news junkie like her husband. She would *rather review reports* on health maintenance organisations than wallow in tabloid or television accounts of her problems. Betsey Wright told me jokingly: "Hillary is proba*bly the only person in America* you could tell a cigar joke to and she wouldn't get it."

HILLARY TELLS THE TRUTH
On the American television programme *Today* late last January, speaking with a certainty that few married people could muster, Hillary declared that she and her hus*band "know everything there* is to know about each other". Nobody could have predicted the snowball effect it would set off — except Bill Clinton. To keep from telling Hillary the *full and awful truth*, he lied to everyone else. By the end of 1998 he was still lying about his lies.

CHELSEA THE LINCHPIN
Betsey Wright recalls Bill taking the time to practise the piano with Chelsea while impatient aides waited. The Clintons' resident babysitter in the mid-1980s, Melinda Martin, says: "Whenever Hillary was there, she always sat with Chelsea while she had dinner." The Clintons rarely went *out together in those years of* strain on their high-wire marriage.

Bill once called Dick Morris to report: "I don't think we are going to make it." But Hillary, *according to* Betsey Wright, never gave her husband an out. Chelsea was their reason to hang on.

TELLING CHELSEA
For years Chelsea had been the President's Saturday night "date" for dinner on the many weekends when Hillary was out of town. Who now would play hearts with him in the wee *small hours* when *insomnia* would not let go its grip on his unquiet mind? Who now would love him unconditionally? Chelsea had one foot across the threshold of inde*pendence when* Bill Clinton took up with Monica Lewinsky, who was six years older than his daughter. In the autumn of 1997 Chelsea would leave him for Stanford.

With *her departure*, the Clintons would lose their most elemental personal bond, their one emotional oasis. Hillary, too, felt the void. A few years before Chelsea went off to college, Hillary even floated the idea of adopting another child. She was mocked — too old.

Hillary told a Miami banquet audience that autumn: "I'm looking for ways to divert myself from the empty nest. And I'll take just about any invitation to dinner that I can get."

CHELSEA AGAINST HER FATHER
Their beloved daughter was called home three weeks following her return to Stanford University after spending Christmas with her parents. Who was going to tell her, and what?

In effect, Hillary told her husband there was no room in this White House for cowards.

You take your daughter to Camp David and explain it yourself. I'm going to Davos.

Chelsea, some say, was so devastated by the revelation that her father had lied to her and her mother that she fought with him.

Her friend the Rev Jesse Jack*son called the White House to* see if he could help. Chelsea asked him to come. The night before the President was due to testify before Starr's grand jury, Jackson told me that he calmed Chelsea and Hillary with Bible stories.

Later he said: "What's different here is that Starr is able to play God with government funding."

Hillary, Jackson says, let out a whooping laugh. "Where did you get that line?" "It has a trademark," he said. "If you use it, give me credit."

CLINTON'S MID-LIFE CRISIS
Three personal markers in Clinton's life occurred during the two years he carried on his affair with Monica.

The two most adoring women in his life "abandoned him" in ways he could not prevent. His mother, Virginia Kelley, died of cancer a year after his inaugural celebration.

But even more agonising was the long, slow slipping-out of his arms of his daughter. The third was when he fell down the stairs at a golf pro's house; overnight, he took on the accoutrements of decay and dependence: wheelchair, brace, cane.

Clinton had always believed that he would die prematurely; he was haunted by the image of Bill Blythe's fatal crash before his own birth, the car carrying the young man they said was his father careering off the road, out of control.



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The full version of Gail Sheehy's ground-breaking study of the Clinton marriage is published in February's issue of *Vanity Fair* magazine. *Subscribe now* to *Vanity Fair* at the special rate of £22.50 and we will send you February's issue free. Call 01858 438815 (quoting ref. 2057). Please note this rate *is limited to new* subcribers. UK addresses only. Offer closes 15/1/99.



Fay Weldon chooses her favourite book



HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN was the most influential for me when young. They are not fairytales but morality tales. Indeed, they seem distinctly unsuitable for children. *The Little Mermaid*, for instance, is an exercise in masochism. Such stories as *The Snow Queen* are brilliantly surreal — they cut to the quick and you end up wishing that they were true. It is all the more tragic because they are not.

Cheap shots on the grouse moors

A new weapon is aimed at the lairds, says Magnus Linklater

It was a piquant occasion, one for the memoirs: the landowning class had been summoned to Bute House, principal residence of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Scotland, to learn its fate. Its representatives sat meekly on gilt chairs, in the Georgian splendour of the first-floor drawing-room. The press had softened them up in advance with some ferocious headlines: "Rogue lairds to have their land sold off", "Feudal rights to be abolished", "Dewar set to break up big estates".

Among those attending were the Duke of Buccleuch and his son, the Earl of Dalkeith, with their 260,000 acres in the Borders, Lord Ramsay, with his estates in Angus, John Grant of Rothiemurcus, with 24,000 acres of the Highlands, and members of the Scottish Landowners' Federation. The Government had warned them that it intended to tackle abuses which stretched back over the years, which had prevented local communities from controlling their own destinies, which allowed a handful of rich families to own half the Highlands, and gave absentee landlords the right to trade great swaths of the most beautiful territory in the world for their own gratification.

Land reform. The very phrase has a 19th-century ring to it. Now, however, said Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, it was at the top of the agenda — one of the first measures to be introduced when a Scottish parliament meets this year. On Tuesday, as he outlined his proposals to an anxious audience, the whiff of socialism drifted across the room. A future Government would intervene to hold up private sales of land if they were judged against "the public interest"; local communities would be given a right to buy whenever land changed hands; they would be helped, with lottery funds, to put together bids; the Government, not the market, would determine the value of the land being sold; compulsory purchase orders would be used by ministers to buy land and transfer it to the community if local people had not been given the chance to bid for it.

It is hard to explain to a non-Scot why such apparently drastic action should be deemed necessary. On the surface it is a blatant interference in the market, a form of government regulation that would provoke outrage if applied to any other aspect of the private sector. It could drive land prices down and scare off prospective owners. And why should the sale of a family estate not be conducted with the same freedom as selling the family silver?

It is not as if the abuses themselves are earth-shattering. There was the Eigg controversy, when that beautiful Hebridean island was bought over the heads of the inhabitants by an obscure German artist; there is the Knoydart Estate, whose owner is at the centre of a fraud inquiry; and, many years ago, there was a dispute on the west coast island of Raasay over an English absentee landlord who wilfully prevented the development of his land. Against these must be set the vast majority of estate owners, who have invested heavily in their acres, provided local employment, and maintained good community relations. They do so usually in places where jobs are scarce and the economy fragile. Some, like Paul van Vlissingen, a Dutchman, invest upwards of £100,000 a year for negligible financial return. The Earl of Cawdor spent £40,000 last year to keep the local post office open. The Buccleuch Estates employ 300 people and maintain several businesses. Whether local communities could match this commitment is only one of the questions raised by the proposals.

The roots of the Government's reforming zeal, however, go deeper. Land reform has long been an unchallenged feature of Labour policy. It is radical, relatively cost-free and popular. It taps into a very Scottish sense of history which goes back to the 19th-century Highland Clearances, and still has echoes today. Meanwhile, the once-powerful Scottish lairds have little clout within new Labour circles. In these circumstances, championing an impeccably left-wing cause — particularly when so many others have had to be shelved — makes political sense.

> Such reforms may well drive land prices down

One might, in these circumstances, have expected a growl of protest from the assembled company as they heard Mr Dewar outline his proposals. It was, however, all very well-mannered; indeed the general reaction was one of relief that nothing worse had been put forward. The Scottish Secretary reassured his listeners that this was not a raid on their territory and that "good landlords have nothing to fear". The punitive measures he was contemplating would be used only in extreme cases. Mr Dewar's sole concern was to promote "diversity" and "accountability".

The fact remains, however, that if these proposals are voted on to the statute book, a powerful interventionist weapon will be handed to any Scottish parliament. It will have free rein to determine who is a "bad landowner" and to take steps accordingly. Whether that will benefit those who live on the land is another matter altogether. What constitutes a "local community" and whether it can create jobs any better than traditional owners remains unexplained. Until that is properly spelt out, the suspicion must remain that what was hailed as a bold act of modern reform is, at heart, nothing more than gesture politics.

comment@the-times.co.uk



Low interest currency

The euro has left the people cold. They need not worry before 2002

Anatole Kaletsky

Well, that's it then. The single currency has arrived. Wim Duisenberg, the president of the European Central Bank, has achieved with the touch of a computer key something that defied the legions of Caesar and the armies of Napoleon and Hitler: he has merged the French and German economies and their key governmental functions. But the sky has not fallen in. The hallowed mark has been abolished and the mighty Bundesbank — said to be the one postwar institution that commanded universal respect among Germans — has been castrated. But the German people have not even bothered to mount a protest, never mind to exchange their savings into dollars or Swiss francs. Meanwhile, the technical execution has proceeded without a hitch.

The computer boffins who missed their new year holidays delivered the goods. The euro started trading with absolutely no problems. It rose just a bit in value against the dollar — enough to prove it was a strong and reliable store of value, but not so much as to plunge European industrialists into British- style hard-currency gloom. Financial markets have celebrated with a new year rally, taking share prices in Paris and Frankfurt to within a whisker of their all-time records and inspiring predictions of a new golden age of European prosperity and competitive capitalism. Yet, among the general public, the interest in the launch of economic and monetary union appears to have been quite low.

Having just spent a week in Ireland, the country that has benefited more than any other from euphoria about the euro, I was surprised by the apparent indifference with which the whole event was treated by the shopkeepers of Co Galway and the Irish media. The Irish radio broadcasts were dominated, as they always are at this time of year, by warnings about hurricanes and New Year's Eve police dragnets. There were also, as usual, reports of cancelled ferries and the normal complaints from farmers about the scandalously low price paid by abattoirs for beef. The first day of trading in the euro earned only some perfunctory mentions on the news broadcasts and front pages, with detailed discussion relegated to the financial news. There were no signs in the shops and the bars about euro prices and shopkeepers were as willing to take payment in pounds sterling as they always have been. Upon my return to Britain I found the absence of euro-triumphalism even more striking. Why, then, have the celebrations among the British advocates of EMU been so subdued?

Two short-term reasons are obvious enough. The EMU cause in Britain has suffered a thoroughly dismal Christmas, despite the financial headlines about investors' "enthusiasm" for the euro (which, if truth were told, was largely a matter of catching up with the euphoria on Wall Street in the days after Christmas, when European markets were mostly closed).

First there was the fall of Peter Mandelson, easily the Government's most important euro-promoter. With Mr Mandelson out of the Cabinet, there should be an attrition of stories, especially in the *Financial Times*, about "senior ministers" who believe that membership of EMU is "inevitable" and are pressing Tony Blair to start an early referendum campaign. Then, on Tuesday, there was *The Guardian*/ICM poll, which showed that British voters would currently vote against EMU membership by a margin of 52 to 29 per cent, with a surprisingly small 19 per cent saying they were undecided. Of course this kind of polling says little about how people would actually vote at a different time and after a long referendum campaign. But the fact that the anti-euro majority is bigger today than it was at the time of the general election must surely come as a disappointment for EMU lobbyists. They have been working zealously to convince the public that Britain will become a banana republic and that British industries will be reduced to rubble if the pound remains outside the euro-zone — yet these warnings seem to have had no impact.

Until a few months ago they were able to console themselves with the thought that the single currency was little more than a theoretical abstraction. Voters were not bothering to listen to the pro-EMU case. But as the euro became a reality, surely the British people should have started to feel the humiliating pangs of exclusion and to recognise the dangers of staying "outside in the cold"? So far, there has been no sign of any such shift in opinion. But the euro-enthusiasts still believe that time, and historical inevitability, are on their side. Surely the British people, who have traditionally favoured pragmatism over ideology, will now be swayed by the practical success of the euro? Surely they will resent the folly of exchanging currencies at national borders? Surely they will ignore all the sentimental claptrap about national sovereignty once they see the practical benefits of the euro?

Perhaps this will happen in time. But the horrible reality which the pro-EMU lobbyists have conveniently ignored until this week, but cannot ignore any longer, is that the British and continental political timetables are again moving unhelpfully out of sync. British proponents of EMU have always assumed that the launch of the single currency would create a sense of reality and inevitability that would sweep all before them. What they forgot was that bankers and businessmen do not always share the same sense of reality as ordinary voters. The launch of the euro may have been the biggest upheaval in years for investment managers, corporate financiers and foreign-exchange dealers. But for the vast majority of voters it has been a non-event. In fact, until euro notes and coins are actually issued the euro will remain a disembodied abstraction — nothing more than a blip on a City dealers' screen.

The really bad news for the British EMU lobby is that the physical creation of the euro, which will not begin until January 2002, will probably come too late to have any positive psychological impact on a general election that is likely to be held in the summer of 2001. Until 2002, British tourists will still have to change their money and perform arithmetic acrobatics, not only when they leave Britain, but also when they cross borders between France, Italy and Spain. They will find this particularly galling after being led to believe by the euro lobbyists in Britain that EMU has turned Europe into a single currency promised land.

To make matters worse, British voters will continue to read about clashes between European finance ministers and tensions between central bankers, at a time when the economic cycles in Germany and Britain are again diverging in a potentially unhelpful way. In the two years between now and the next general election, Britain should be pulling out of its present economic slowdown, the pound may be falling slightly, to the benefit of British industry, and interest rates are likely to remain stable or continue to fall. In much of Europe, meanwhile, the current strength of the euro is likely to cause an economic slowdown and a reduction in exports, which will not reach their nadir until some time in 1999.

It is quite possible, therefore, that in the period leading up to the general election, Europe will suffer some political tensions or economic disappointments, while Britain's performance proves no worse than expected, or even slightly improves. If so, British people will readily attribute this divergence to the abstract economic experiment of creating the euro. If, on the other hand, Europe prospers, they will find it difficult to see why this should be attributed directly to the euro. Either way, the bias in the British public's assessment of the euro is likely to become even more sceptical than it is today. Only after the physical euro is created will this period of limbo come to an end. Only after 2002 will the British public be able to begin a serious and objective assessment of joining EMU.

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You can't hurry me, love

Prince Edward was right to wait, argues James Brown

Five years might seem like a long time even for a Prince to go a-courting. But I can assure you that even as Sophie Rhys-Jones's friends are screaming "At last, what took him so long?", Prince Edward's mates will be worrying about how quickly he has rushed into this. Marriage (or proposal of) is definitely the most awkward part of the modern male/female interface. And not just for royals.

The real truth of modern relationships is that men and women have never been closer in their need for commitment. Yet after a few months of frolicking in the lusty froth of a new relationship, as a couple are congratulating themselves on having found someone with whom they want to share their bed, Flake, and time, their thoughts will be moving at very different speeds. The women, especially those in their late 20s and early 30s, will be considering their new beau as a potential husband, whereas the boyfriend might just be considering throwing his pornographic magazines away.

Men are cautious about rushing into marriage with good reason. Those of us born around or after England's 1966 World Cup win are unwitting victims of A Generation of Divorce. It's high enough in men's minds for the British singer Finlay Quaye to admit "I'm a Snapper" — the Irish term for being illegitimate — and "I wish I had a pappy to show me right from wrong". As well as worrying about creating a marriage that will last no longer than the average football manager's contract, men have few decent role-models to show them the way.

Five years ago every mother in the land would have loved to have Will Carling or Kenneth Branagh as a son-in-law and yet both have crashed their marriages all over the tabloids. These two squeaky clean men fell at the first hurdle. But genuine masculine heroes are no better. Paul Weller is divorced. Robert De Niro was recently embroiled in a French scandal and Glenn Hoddle spent more time with his faith healer and his mistress than with his wife.

Good marital role-models are few and far between for young men. Michael and Shakira Caine spring to mind, as do Jonathan and Jane Ross. These are good fellas with front and style who see their wives as an important part of their lives not just an extra seat at a première.

It's not laziness or fear that prevent real men from rushing down the aisle, but genuine concern that they don't take on something they can't handle. Thirty years ago women would have been happy to be thanked for putting the dinner on the table and amazed if the husband did the washing up.

Nowadays women would like you to look like Leonardo DiCaprio, charm like Johnny Vaughan and behave like Gary Lineker. Pretty hard going for an average guy with British teeth, second-hand jokes, and only Walkers Crisps in common with the Football Focus golden boy.

I still don't see why you *have* to get married. The fashion designer Paul Smith and his partner, Pauline, have lived happily together for more than thirty years with no sign of a wedding ring. Following Peter Cook's example, I initially tried to persuade my lovely girlfriend Kaz to get married but live in a different house from me, for her own sake. But rightly, she wasn't having it.

When I did propose, a gloriously drunken spur-of-the-moment affair in a London bar after just three months, I woke the next day to negotiate a 12-month settling-in period before we would get engaged. That gap relieved us of any pressure that might have been brought on by a post-proposal cool- down.

Certainly the colleague who met and wed a woman within a month wasn't happy to discover he'd married a maniac and it was no surprise when, a very painful year later, we had to scoop him off the platform at Clapham Junction — a broken man minus his dignity and his flat.

So if it does appear that men are a little slow in asking women to marry them, it's with good reason. After all, they're just flexing that organ women are always complaining they don't see enough of — the brain. A slow march towards engagement isn't a sign that men don't care, it's proof that they do. I've never asked my best man, eight years into his relationship, why he hasn't proposed because it's none of my damned business. Any woman who was worth their salt and wanted to get married should be able to strong-arm their partners to the registry office.

Once my 12 months were up there was more nag than the Cheltenham Gold Cup. Over a year into wedded bliss, I've only just managed to get the wedding photos developed and am now considering getting a ring. Ladies, getting married is the least of your problems, getting your husbands to realise what they've done is much harder. Don't panic though, not all guys are so reluctant. When David Batty, the England footballer, heard he would be unable to attend his agent's third wedding because of international duty, he replied: "Never mind, I'll go to the next one."

The author is Editor of GQ magazine.

Wills power

A MINISTER appointed to regulate businesses in the aftermath of Peter Mandelson's disgrace faces censure by his new department for his own entrepreneurial activities. Michael Wills, new minister for Trade and Industry (with responsibility for small businesses) is in trouble over his own extremely small business. Wills, director of Attractions Limited, a struggling TV production outfit, has not sent the company's annual returns to Companies House — which reports to his own DTI. All limited companies are requested to do so or face a court order.

Attractions Ltd is now so late that its has been sent a default notice and is waiting for its final warning. If it still fails to comply, the DTI will step in. "It can easily end in court," says a gleeful bod from Companies House.

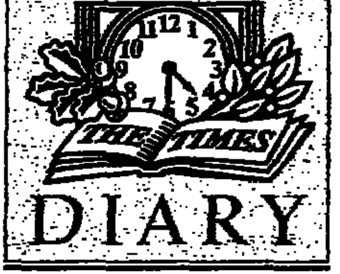
Wills (right) seems keen to distance himself from the firm. "I am going to sell the shares at the end of the week to the other partners," he tells me. "We have no interest in it now. It has stopped operations." Not that it was ever particularly active. Under Wills, Attractions made a Channel Five series, featuring fun sites for all the family to visit. "It was a great idea, but they never recommissioned the series," Wills ventures.

Before being appointed a Trade minister earlier this week, Wills was producer and director of Juniper Communications. During his headship, he tells me he



produced "many great programmes" including a series of interviews with Bill Gates, Robert Redford (left) and Richard Dawkins as well as a programme about Feng Shui. "When you own a company, it allows you to do whatever you want," he adds. Rather like being a minister then.

● *REGAL displeasure may be behind the choice of St George's Chapel, Windsor, (first mooted here as the venue) rather than the grander Westminster Abbey. The Queen has not been impressed by the unseemly sacking of Dr Martin Neary, the organist, by the Dean, Dr Wesley Carr — hence the "desire for a more personal celebration than recent royal weddings".*



Panto prince

HAS Robert Harris been spinning a line about his chum Peter Mandelson? The novelist told journalists inquiring about Wendy, so named by his old security guards, over the new year that he had "a feeling he's gone abroad". The next day, as darkness fell over Oxford, panto-goers at the Playhouse for a *Cinderella* matinee saw Harris and Wendy, clutching a child of his notorious apologist (Wendy is fairy godfather to Robert's youngest, Matilda) before slipping into Brown's for a bite. Warbles my wicked sister: "I bet the children yelled 'your career's behind you'."

● *IF THE dawn chorus is a little subdued at Greenwich these days, blame Greg Hayman, Dome spokesman. The man hoping that the black redstarts do not nest in an awkward spot on the construction site keeps pigeons in Wirksworth, Derbyshire, where his bird-control skills are legendary. "He is the first person to call if a pigeon needs strangling," I am told.*

Silent honour

THE public Honours system appears to be not so public after all. I have learnt that Paddy Devlin, an Ulster Catholic and staunch nationalist, received a CBE this year but appeared nowhere in the New Year's Honours List. Devlin was keen to keep news of his honour from his republican cronies — but he still wanted the honour, thanks very much. Whitehall says that while this is unusual, Devlin is entitled to privacy. I hope the Queen is pleased with her new Commander.

"Flippin' Windsor knot keeps on coming undone!"

● *ARRIVING in leisurely style at Diary Towers is the Child Support Agency Christmas card. "Goodwill towards men," it states. A U-turn?*

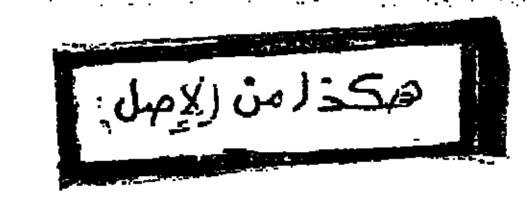
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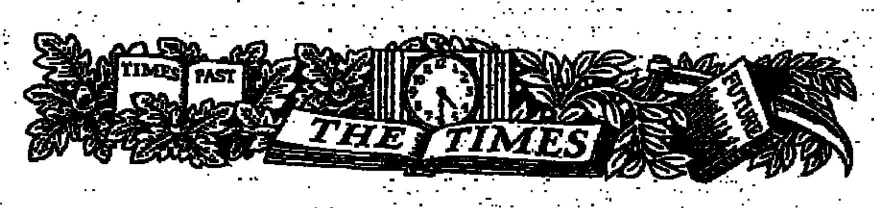
TONY BLAIR spurned an offer to holiday in Blighty before his rather fraught trip to the Seychelles. Fiona Bruce, an old habitué of the islands, was so alarmed that the PM should return despite the "appalling human rights record" (I *think* she means in the Seychelles) that she offered the use of her home in the Lake District instead and entered into quite a correspondence with the FO. "It only has three bedrooms, but there is a sofa-bed too," she tells me. "And there is plenty of room in the village for his guards." It would also have been free — saving the Blairs £30,000.

● *"CULT" television has lured another victim. Helena Bonham Carter wants to join* Charlie's Angels. *The Seventies series which slipped Farrah Fawcett, Jaclyn Smith and Kate Jackson into tight trousers and disturbed the adolescent dreams of a generation, also appeals to Helena, my favourite actress. "From a young age I wanted to be one of the Angels," she says. "I wanted to be Kate Jackson [the relatively clever angel, Sabrina Duncan]. Even though I was a very shy child who didn't like standing up in front of people." Helena has timed her pitch well. A film, with new* Angels *serving the mysterious Charlie Townsend, is imminent.*



JASPER GERARD





A LISTING SERVICE

A winter chill hides the NHS's real problems

At the last election, the Labour Party made five pledges. One of these was to cut the number of people on hospital waiting lists by 100,000. This pledge, so simple to make, easy to understand and seemingly attractive, is now returning to haunt the Government. By attaching such totemic significance to this target, Ministers risk distorting priorities and ignoring more pressing problems within the National Health Service. Yesterday, despite being able to announce a record monthly fall in the number of people waiting for hospital treatment, the Government was facing the usual seasonal cries that the NHS is in crisis. It cannot blame this entirely on the current outbreak of flu, which has not yet reached epidemic levels. The NHS is suffering from a number of debilitating illnesses, the cure for which is not, as Ministers appear to think, simply spending more taxpayers' money.

The number of people on hospital waiting lists is a crude measure of the NHS's performance. This figure does not reflect the time patients have to wait — simply the length of the queue — nor the type of treatments people have received. Instead, putting pressure on the NHS to meet government targets could mean doctors and nurses place political priorities above patients' needs. By tending to those who need quick, straightforward operations before others who require lengthy, complex treatments, the waiting list falls faster.

This has not deterred Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, from spending £417 million this year to cut waiting lists, and a further £159 million to cope with any potential winter crisis. His ferocious opponent in the Shadow Cabinet, Ann Widdecombe, is right to highlight that, despite this extra expenditure, the number of people waiting more than a year has doubled under this Government. Yet, even if there were more beds, and even if the emergency package had been announced earlier in the year as Miss Widdecombe suggests, this would have not tackled the main problems facing the NHS.

The nursing profession is in crisis. The NHS has at least 8,000 nursing vacancies. Hospitals, under strain to fill these gaps, have resorted to recruiting nurses from as far afield as the Philippines and South Africa, or hiring them from private agencies — the cost of which has doubled. To remedy this, Mr Dobson must make nursing a more attractive career for young people. A junior nurse is paid a fifth less than a policewoman. Not surprisingly, attempts to woo more recruits have failed: there are spaces on nurses' training courses for the first time ever. Until this shortage is tackled, lack of nurses will remain the single most important constraint on the health service's performance.

Crucial though this task is, it will not address the fundamental dilemma facing Mr Dobson. However many more nurses are recruited, more hospitals are built and wards opened, the public's expectations will always exceed the NHS's capacity. Anecdotes of people with flu ringing 999 typify the culture of entitlement that now exists. Mr Dobson is trying to feed this appetite by spending an extra £21 billion on health over the next three years. This will merely fuel, rather than control, public expectations. By focusing on such simplistic targets as waiting lists, ignoring the nursing crisis and failing to address this underlying problem, Mr Dobson and his successors will face cries of "crisis" for many winters to come.

WIND OF CHANGE

South Africa faces an uncertain modernisation agenda

When Tony Blair originally decided to visit South Africa this week he must have thought that his tour would be a relatively uncomplicated exercise. The trip offered a set of appealing diplomatic encounters in friendly territory before the Prime Minister returned to the hurly-burly of domestic politics. His schedule includes confirmation of defence orders for British companies worth £1 billion, a new aid and trade package, and a round of meetings in which Mr Blair and his entourage will bid farewell to Nelson Mandela and then develop a deeper relationship with Thabo Mbeki, the man who, almost certainly, will soon become South Africa's President.

The turbulent events at home over the past two weeks have altered the context of Mr Blair's arrangements. After talks with Mr Mandela and Mr Mbeki in Pretoria today, the Prime Minister will take the opportunity of a speech in Cape Town tomorrow to restate his commitment to the modernisation credo of new Labour: economic realism, fresh initiatives in education and reform of the welfare state. Although Mr Blair's message may be aimed at a constituency 10,000 miles away, his language will be familiar to South Africans.

For the past five years, the African National Congress has struggled to make the transition from the slogans of socialism to the practicalities of power. Mr Mandela has presided over a sharp reduction in public debt, a quite substantial degree of market liberalisation and a modest element of privatisation. As the neo-liberal Democratic Party, invariably the ANC's most effective opposition, has often argued, Mr Mbeki will have to move much more decisively in this direction if he is to secure South Africa's economic future.

This has not proved a popular programme with the party faithful. The ANC has sought to maintain an uneasy truce between technocrats who accept the need for reform and a mass membership that would much prefer a dramatic extension of affirmative action and the redistribution of income. Mr Mandela's personal stature has permitted his Government to stick with difficult but essential policies despite the fact that real incomes and employment are lower now than when the ANC took office.

It will not be as easy for Mr Mbeki to hold back his party's radical faction. They will demand that the ANC takes the opportunity that may shortly arise to alter South Africa's constitutional arrangements. This would involve restructuring a judiciary that has proved as independent under the ANC as it often was in the apartheid era. Any such change would be rightly seen as casting doubt on the ANC's democratic credentials. Mr Mbeki needs to resist this temptation. He also must take much more dramatic action against a crime wave that is undermining South Africa's international reputation.

Mr Blair may thus by accident have found himself in an appropriate place to make the case for his political philosophy. Whether South Africa becomes an encouraging example for "Third Way" modernisers worldwide will depend in very large degree on Mr Mbeki's agenda. The Prime Minister can at least take comfort in the fact that Mr Mandela's Government is — despite party feuds, economic slowdown and allegations of petty corruption — still coasting towards comfortable re-election.

NATURAL JUSTICE

Financial regulation must be fair

The general public may have scant sympathy for Keith Percy, a City fund manager who yesterday had to accept the indignity of a public reprimand and a hefty bill from the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation. Those who are fearful of holding onto their own jobs, at a fraction of the salaries that prevail in the Square Mile, will probably feel that Mr Percy's previously well rewarded years might provide sufficient cushion against the current disapproval of the City police. They may note, too, that Mr Percy is once more happily, and no doubt lucratively, at work in the fund management industry.

But even high earning City folk deserve justice. Mr Percy's case has highlighted qualms over the way in which the financial services are regulated in this country. The man who was chief executive of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management Ltd when its idiosyncratic fund manager, Peter Young, contrived to lose more than £200 million of investors' cash — later reimbursed by the company — may be judged to have failed in his job, but he is not unique in that. Many a failed chief executive in industry is sent packing with a generous pecuniary farewell handshake, a practice of which investors have been extraordinarily tolerant.

Those at work in the City, however, appear to be at risk of treatment at the other end of the tolerance spectrum. They can be barred from practising their trade for years and heavily fined. It was August 1996 when Mr Percy was shown the door at Morgan Grenfell. Had he continued to fight his regulator by going to a tribunal, he claims that he would have been at risk of losing £1 million, a sum that not even the most successful of City practitioners may feel able to wager. There are some who suspect that such a system comes dangerously close to a denial of natural justice, and have said as much to the European Court of Human Rights.

It is crucial for those who entrust their savings to finance houses and insurance companies that they can have complete confidence in the way the industry is policed. That is now the ultimate responsibility of Howard Davies, the Lord High Regulator of all things financial. As head of the Financial Services Authority, Mr Davies wants to devise a regulatory system which, he says, is 'fair, not too costly and able to respond to mischief effectively and efficiently'.

Such an ambition should find favour with both the financial services industry and its users. Yet, as it assumes the regulatory responsibilities of the 11 separate organisations which have policed the City, there are fears that the FSA may wield an excessive amount of power, as investigator, prosecutor, judge and jury. Mr Davies is aware of the risks and is instituting what is intended to be an impartial committee to oversee the dispensation of justice. Its task should not be under-estimated: if the FSA does not live up to Mr Davies's laudable ambitions, City practitioners will demand danger money and more lawyerly protection — and investors and pensioners will foot the bill.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Flu puts hospitals at full stretch

From Dr Roger Jay

Sir, The idea that hospitals are full of patients with simple flu who should not be there (reports, January 5 and 6) is nonsense. As a physician, I am seeing about twice the usual number of emergency admissions. All are genuinely in need of hospital treatment and few can be sent home after brief assessment.

The £159 million earmarked by Mr Frank Dobson is of no use at this stage of a crisis, when there is a serious recruitment problem for doctors and nurses. Because we are working at full capacity throughout the year there is no slack in the system to cope with the increase in admissions.

Our colleagues in surgery, gynaecology and psychiatry whose beds we are filling would be delighted if general medical beds were funded and staffed adequately.

Yours sincerely,
ROGER JAY,
18 St George's Terrace, East Boldon,
Tyne and Wear NE36 0LU.
113031.1755@compuserve.com
January 6.

From Mr Ray Ellis

Sir, Officially there is no flu epidemic.

I am recovering from the flu. My son has had flu and it looks as if my daughter is on her way down with it. My son's girlfriend's family all had flu over Christmas. My father's wife is in bed with it. Hospitals are swamped by flu victims. Our road has seen flu in more than half of the 19 homes in the last month.

You report Dr Doug Fleming as saying: "There is no point in going to see your doctor . . . unless you have a serious chest disease or are elderly and living on your own." Most of the folk I know have not been to the doctor. How then do the powers that be know that there is no flu epidemic?

Yours faithfully,
RAY ELLIS,
15 Montfort Road, Kemsing,
Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 6SA.
ray.ellis@rushmore.co.uk
January 6.

From the Reverend Peter Mullen

Sir, During the current flu outbreak we are told, "Drink more fluids". But does this advice come from the Department of Health or the Ministry for Tautology and Pleonasm?

Yours sincerely,
PETER MULLEN,
The Watch House,
10 Giltspur Street, EC1A 9DE.
January 6.

Quality of NHS

From Dr G. Murray Jones

Sir, The letter from the Association of Surgeons (December 29; see also letters, November 19 and 28) makes it difficult for an old member of the General Medical Services Committee of the BMA to keep silent.

The NHS intended the GP to be at the centre, with consultant advice and specialist treatment readily and freely available when necessary. We strove to improve the lot of the GP while, unfortunately, the consultants were not anxious to increase their numbers.

Mr Robert Lane says that "Nobody in the profession condones poor performance", yet it took a long time to expose the Bristol saga which he mentions, and we know the fate of one who did not condone.

In the new year if all the profession becomes worthy of its calling nobility will be restored and recruitment will increase.

Yours faithfully,
G. MURRAY JONES,
58 Danybryn Avenue,
Radyr, Cardiff CF4 8DD.
December 29.

Fallow ground

From Mr J. H. D. Gibson

Sir, I read today of the "farmer" using some of his land for a burial ground. Although his holding is "too small to be viable as an agricultural enterprise", and although he does not grow crops or rear livestock, he collects some £14,000 per year from the European Union set-aside scheme and for doing nothing but manage his land as a wildlife habitat.

My back garden is also too small to be agriculturally viable, and I do not grow crops or rear livestock, but manage it as a wildlife (plus next door's cat) habitat. I am applying for set-aside grants.

Yours etc,
J. H. D. GIBSON,
19 Evendine Close,
Worcester WR5 2DB.
December 29.

Cruelty to dogs

From Mrs Susan M. Barnard

Sir, Your report (January 5) of two policemen who were dismissed after their convictions for cruelty to their dogs makes me wonder how they (or indeed any policemen) would have fared if their alleged victims had been people rather than animals.

Yours faithfully,
SUSAN M. BARNARD,
4 Egerton Drive, Hale,
Altrincham, Cheshire WA15 8EF.
January 5.

School flexibility needed to allow family holidays

From Mr K. J. Hard

Sir, The head of the London Oratory School, Mr John McIntosh, is reported to insist that parents observe his three Hs — haircuts, holidays and homework ("Head castigates Blair for term-time holiday", later editions, January 4; see also letters, same day).

The first two Hs are essentially trivial. They have little to do with the process of education — a process which the educational establishment would have us believe can take place only in schools.

The Prime Minister should instruct Mr David Blunkett to remove the requirement for parents to obtain permission to withdraw their children for up to ten days' family holiday during term-time. If this requirement were removed (at least until children embark on GCSE courses) then Mr Blair would save himself, and other parents, from arbitrary decisions which I believe are supported neither by evidence nor common sense.

Yours faithfully,
KELVIN HARD
8 Albany Terrace,
Worcester WR1 3DU.
January 4.

From the Reverend John L. Evans

Sir, Is the Prime Minister of our country to be told by a schoolmaster that he may or may not take his family away on holiday, simply because the school is operating a, by now, antiquated three-term year?

Do we believe that the Blair children would be damaged for life because they miss a week or two of binomial theorem or Latin grammar?

Surely it is not beyond the bounds of possibility to shed the three-term method and offer teaching all year round? Parents can then take their families away for the period most convenient to them.

Our teachers have had it too much their own way and seem to be obsessed with the belief that education occurs only within the four walls of a school building, and that this education will be offered when they decide.

I feel it must be doing Mr and Mrs Blair a power of good to have their children with them and educating them within the family circle — and it must be doing the young Blairs some good also, spending so much time with a very influential person in world affairs, even if he is only "Dad" to them.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN L. EVANS,
The Chaplaincy, Alnut's Hospital,
Goring Heath, Oxfordshire RG8 7RR.
January 4.

From Mr Iain Peden

Sir, I do not have the option of taking my daughter on a cheap, mid-term holiday, I'm a teacher. Members of the Pay Review Body please note.

Yours,
IAIN PEDEN,
12 Water Meadow Close,
Great Oakley, Corby NN18 8JD.
January 5.

From Mr H. J. C. Jones

Sir, It would help parents to avoid taking holidays during term-time if the schools could co-ordinate their holiday dates better. I have one child at primary school and another at secondary school, both under the same education authority, but their holidays do not coincide. This makes it almost impossible to take a fortnight's holiday at any time other than the August break.

Yours sincerely,
H. J. C. JONES,
18 Millers Meadow, Rainow,
Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 5UE.
howard@hjcj.globalnet.co.uk
January 6.

From Mr Robert R. Rodwell

Sir, Some amelioration of the school holidays/term-time situation would be achieved if schools in mainland Britain modelled their working year on that which has prevailed in Northern Ireland since compulsory education began.

The school summer holiday here is at least two months, from the end of June into September — a reflection, presumably, of the seasonal labour requirements of former subsistence farming. All the other holidays, particularly half-terms, are correspondingly shorter.

Children in Northern Ireland spend as much time at school as their mainland Great Britain counterparts, but the longer summer vacation gives a longer period over which the peak family-holiday demand is spread.

Yours, hard at work,
BOB RODWELL,
86 Shore Road,
Ballyhalbert, Newtownards,
Co Down BT22 1BJ.
January 4.

From Mr N. Green

Sir, I travel daily by bus to Chester (seven miles) using an excellent quarter-hourly service.

Although the journey is scheduled to take 23 minutes, this target is only ever achieved during school holidays. Indeed the journey can take almost twice as long on a wet Monday morning in term-time.

Surely if school holidays were staggered time, fuel and stress would be saved for all road users alike.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS GREEN,
22 Trevalyn Way,
Rossett, Wrexham LL12 0EJ.
January 5.

'False ideals' of Jimi Hendrix

From Mr Graham Wade

Sir, In your People of the Century leader (December 31) you comment that Jimi Hendrix "was a hero to all great guitarists of the time". One person to whom Hendrix was not in the least a hero was Andrés Segovia, who abominated everything represented by that culture of cacophony, drugs and bizarre behaviour.

Well may you comment that Hendrix "fashioned a character which now seems normal". By the end of the 1960s a strange inversion of values had journalists commenting that Segovia, in his dress suit, performing gently audible guitar music from five centuries without any form of amplification to a capacity audience at the Royal Festival Hall was something of an eccentric, while the manifest excesses of the rock scene were indeed assumed to be "normal".

I believe Segovia (1893-1987), whose concert career stretched from 1909 until a few months before he died, was a truer candidate for your People of the Century. His long life was not self-destructive, he never "delighted in drug-taking", and his music was less "mind-blowing" than "mind-restoring". He dedicated his life to an art in search of spiritual health, integration and wholeness, not the hallucinogenic and the drug-sick, now acclaimed as "brilliant and innovative".

In this Segovia was more representative of "normal" human life than all the young martyrs of false ideals and pernicious lifestyles.

Yours etc,
GRAHAM WADE
(Author, *A New Look at Segovia, His Life, His Music*, Vols 1 and 2, Melbay Publications, 1997),
34 Holmwood Avenue,
Leeds LS6 4NJ.
December 31.

From Mr Nicholas Elliott, QC

Sir, Whilst I have always been a fan of Jimi Hendrix, I fear you may have overstated his case in claiming that he was a "trailblazer in the field of political protest". I am quite certain Bob Dylan would "protest" against the statement that "Until the late 1960s, pop icons were not overtly political".

Nonetheless, your perspective on pop history proves that "the *Times* they are a'changing".

Yours sincerely,
NICHOLAS ELLIOTT,
Old Whistley Farmhouse,
Potterne, Devizes,
Wiltshire SN10 5TD.
elliott@whistley.freeserve.co.uk
December 31.

The 51st state

From Mr Graham Bate

Sir, Although the abolition of the House of Lords is a strong temptation, the rest of Dr Philip Roberts's list of benefits of the UK becoming the 51st state of the US (letter, December 30) is heavily outweighed by the crosses we would have to bear.

Baseball caps, worn in both directions, would proliferate, television would be interrupted by advertisements every three minutes, our spelling would become non-U, lawyers would increase tenfold in number to cope with the litigation and Lord's would be levelled in order to play rounders. Worst of all, every day would become "nice".

On balance, becoming a *département* of the old enemy would seem preferable.

Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM BATE,
6 Prince William Road,
Oundle, Peterborough PE8 4HA.
December 30.

From Dr Christopher John Bolt

Sir, I agree with the sentiments expressed by Dr Roberts about our becoming the 51st state. After all, if this were to happen, the two countries would have gone full circle.

It is pertinent that Dr Roberts refers to Hawaii because on August 21, 1959, it became the 50th state. Being the only state to embrace a version of the Union Jack within its own flag, it must have had a premonition that this subject would be raised.

Perhaps we should take our monarch with us, and our present Queen could stand for election as the first state governor.

Yours faithfully,
C. J. BOLT,
18 Frobisher Way,
Greenhithe, Kent DA9 9JN.
January 3.

Gene-altered food

From Mr Paul Henderson

Sir, You report (December 30) that in a poll conducted by Friends of the Earth 19 of 23 highly-rated restaurants supported a ban on genetically-modified food. I was one of three abstainers.

In our restaurant we serve almost entirely organically-raised produce and fish caught by local small trawlers because we think it has more flavour than mass-produced food. But I don't know of any evidence that genetic modification of plants is necessarily a bad thing. Much of the grain raised in America today is grown from genetically-modified seed, which is almost certainly used in breakfast cereals. Anyone who eats a steak in an American restaurant is probably eating beef fed with genetically-modified corn.

Selective breeding of grapevine rootstock or roses is producing genetically new plants all the time. It is slower than "gene stacking", or altering genes in a laboratory, but it is certainly genetic modification. An American farmer friend of mine recently told me that mechanical innovation cannot do much more to increase agricultural productivity but that genetics will dominate the future.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL HENDERSON
(Proprietor),
Gidleigh Park Restaurant and Hotel,
Chagford, Devon TQ13 8HH.

NT and hunting

From the Director-General of The National Trust

Sir, In your leading article of January 3, "Ahead of the pack", it is implied that the National Trust has either banned hunting outright on its land or has threatened to do so. Neither implication is true. The trust has not threatened to ban hunting. Fox-hunting, mink-hunting and beagling take place on the trust's land where they are the tradition of the country and do not conflict with nature conservation or tenants' rights.

In 1997 the trust ended deer-hunting on its land. This decision was taken following a two-year study into the relative effects on deer of culling by rifle and by hunting with hounds.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN DRURY,
Director-General,
The National Trust,
36 Queen Anne's Gate, SW1H 9AS.

Lawyers in a spin

From Mr Peter Wade

Sir, The group of lawyers who characterise the public image of their colleagues as "middle-aged male money-grabbers" (News in brief, later editions, December 30), are committing a libel.

To my knowledge some are quite young and female.

Yours sincerely,
PETER WADE,
12 Bell Close,
Colchester, Essex CO2 8EP.
December 30.

The strain of the train

From Mr Edward Sanderson

Sir, I always thought "Notwork Southeast" was a more appropriate slogan and quite simple to implement (letters, December 30 and January 5).

Yours faithfully,
EDWARD SANDERSON,
18 Falcon Avenue,
Bromley, Kent BR1 2EH
edward@lineone.net
January 5.

Winter clean-up

From Mrs G. R. Ely

Sir, Rosemary Fernandez (letter, December 29) has given us her husband's invaluable word "Defragmenting". I do not know how I have managed without it.

I can offer him, in exchange, a word from my French mother-in-law's private collection of Franglais — to "demantipulate". It means to take to pieces such items as the vacuum cleaner. It might help him while defragmenting his garage.

Yours faithfully,
M. L. ELY,
Greystones, Charlton,
Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 0EN.
December 30.

Naval security

From Lady Thomas

Sir, Mr Arthur Radley (letter, December 30) pointed out that your recent obituary of my late husband, Admiral Sir Richard Thomas, gave him as "appointed KGB". Not so strange, actually; he called me his secret weapon and on anything to do with family or social he said he'd have to talk to mission control.

Yours faithfully,
PADDY THOMAS,
Holmwood House,
Emsworth, Hampshire PO10 7AZ.
January 4.

Business letters, page 31

Letters may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*



COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM HOUSE
January 6: It is with the greatest pleasure that The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh announce the betrothal of their beloved son The Prince Edward to Miss Sophie Rhys-Jones, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Rhys-Jones.

SANDRINGHAM HOUSE
January 6: Today being the Feast of the Epiphany, a Sung Eucharist was held in the Chapel Royal, St James's Palace, when the customary offerings of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh were made on behalf of The Queen by Air Vice-Marshal David Hawkins-Leth and Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Birdwood (Gentlemen Ushers to Her Majesty).

The Bishop of London (Dean of Her Majesty's Chapels Royal) was the Celebrant and presented the Offerings, assisted by the Reverend William Booth (Sub-Dean of Her Majesty's Chapels Royal), and the Reverend Mark Oakley (Deputy Priest in Ordinary).

The Queen's Body Guard of the Yeoman of the Guard was on duty in the Chapel.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
RICHMOND PARK
January 6: Princess Alexandra, Patron of the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, was represented by Mrs Peter Afia at the Funeral of the Earl of Lanesborough which was held at St Leonard's Church, Swithland, Leicestershire this afternoon.

School news

Brentwood School
The Lent Term begins today. Entrance Examinations for the Main and Preparatory Schools take place on January 30. Half Term is from February 12 to February 22. The Chamber Concert will be held on February 3. A Jazz and Musical concert takes place on February 10. An Ensembles Concert takes place on March 3. An Orchestral Concert takes place on *March 11. The Junior* School production of *Grimm Tales* will be performed from March 18 to 20. The Old Brentwoods Society Dinner will be held on March 26 in School. Term ends on March 26.

Dean Close School
Lent Term begins today. Paul Marchand is Captain of Hockey. On Saturday, February 6, there will be an Open Morning, the Art Scholarships will take place on January 26, 13+ Academic Scholarship Examinations on February 22, 23 and 24 and Music Scholarship auditions on March 4. Sixth Form Scholarship Examinations will take place on March 6. In the Bacon Theatre *The Duchess of Malfi* will be presented on February 5 and 6 and *A Man for All Seasons* on March 12 and 13. The Chamber Concert for Lent is on February 28 in the Prince Michael Hall and the Passiontide Concert on March 14 in Chapel. The Bishop of Tewkesbury will conduct Confirmation on Sunday, March 7. The Old Decanian matches are on March 12 and term ends on Wednesday, March 17.

Gad's Hill School, Kent
To mark the 75th anniversary of Gad's Hill School (originally Gad's Hill Place School), a service will be held in Rochester Cathedral on Friday, June 25, with a dinner afterwards at the school. A Family Day will be held on June 26 when *all past pupils and staff, and their* families, will be welcome. For details telephone 01474 822366.

Latymer Upper School, W6
The Spring Term began yesterday at Latymer Upper School, and ends on March 25. The Spring Concert is on March 11, and there is a Concert at St Paul's, Hammersmith, on March 17, featuring the orchestras of Latymer Upper, and The Godolphin & Latymer School and The Johanneum from Hamburg. The Middle School play Guards, Guards! is on March 3-5; and the Sixth Form Production will be from March 18-20. The international Work Experience Programme in association with schools from Madrid, Berlin, Paris and New York commences at the *end of term.*

Queen Margaret's School, York
Spring Term begins today and ends on Friday, March 19. The Sixth Form Scholarship and Music Scholarship Examinations are scheduled for February 24. The Music Scholars' Concert will take place on January 24 and Evensong in York Minster will be sung by the Chapel Choir on Monday, March 1. A Fashion Show in aid of the National Asthma Campaign will take place at the school on March 3. The Bishop of Selby will officiate at the service of Confirmation on March 14. The skiing party depart for Austria over Half Term and the History of Art visit to Rome and Florence takes place after the end of term.

St John's School, Leatherhead
The Spring Term began yesterday at St John's School, Leatherhead. Matthew Gadd is School Captain and Jonathan Allen is Deputy Captain. Aidan Nugent is Captain of Football and Laura Milton is Captain of Netball. Churchill House will perform *Adventures on Church Hill* on February 11 and 12, and Brendan Behan's *The Hostage* will be performed by the ODS on March 18 and 19. Choral Evensong with Prep Schools is at 6.30pm on Tuesday, March 9. There will be an Orchestral Play Day for Prep Schools on January 28 and the School Concert is at 7.30pm on Sunday, March 14.

Appointment

Sir Ivan Callan to be Ambassador to Oman from February in succession to Mr Richard Muir, who will be moving to a new Diplomatic Service appointment.

Birthdays today

Mr Richard Armstrong, conductor, 56; Dr Tim Black, chief executive, Global Family Planning Charity, Marie Stopes International, 62; Her Honour Hazel Counsell, 68; Mr Hunter Davies, author and broadcaster, 63; Mr Tony Elliott, founder, Time Out Group, 52; Sir Peter Graham, QC, 65; Sir Stuart Hampson, chairman, John Lewis Partnership, 52; the Right Rev Christopher Herbert, Bishop of St Albans, 55; Mr Ian La Frenais, screenwriter and producer, 62; *Sir Charles Masefield*, former test pilot, 59; Mr Ross Norman, squash champion, 40; the Viscount of Oxfuird, 65; Sir John Page, former chairman, National Ports Council, 84; Lady (Kenneth) Scott, former chairwoman, Volunteer Centre UK, 67; Air Commodore the Hon Sir Peter Vanneck, former Lord Mayor of London, 77; Sir John Walker, FRS, molecular biologist, 58; Mr Will Wyatt, chief executive, BBC Broadcast, 57; Mr Roger D. Young, former Director-General, Institute of Management, 59.

Premium Bonds

The following Premium Bond prize-winners for January have been announced:
£100,000: 46RN 504726, winner has a holding of £3,040 and comes from Kent: 47BS 122489, £20,000, Buckinghamshire: 96MS 338856, £19,992, North Yorkshire: 47NZ 707623, £20,000, West Midlands: 72LZ 432750, £20,000, South Yorkshire: 60BT 665860, £16,580, Lincolnshire: 94JL 734492, £10,000, Powys: 48CW 397339, £18,403, West Yorkshire.
£50,000: 80BT 294182, £10,500, Stirling: 78MN 699884, £7,055, West Sussex: 98QZ 831341, £20,000, Lincolnshire: 49CK 277282, £19,996, Hampshire: 41FL 333876, £2,000, West Midlands: 66ST 486325, £20,000, *South Yorkshire: 62QF 278918, £5,000, West* Yorkshire: 32PF 753462, £395, West Yorkshire: 83CF 538401, £10,000, Barnet: 72NT 014381, £20,000, Oxfordshire: 55QN 304884, £19,563, Hampshire: 19YF 860364, £10,649, Cambridgeshire: 70BT 539628, £19,855, Hounslow: 73ZT 029660, £14,003, Worcestershire: 33NB 222902, £19,005, Enfield.
£25,000: 51PZ 907242, £15,800, Lancashire: 84AL 679658, £8,000, Neath and Port Talbot: 52GK 287349, £14,500, West Sussex: 32XL 487272, £460, Lincolnshire: 58ES 922565, £20,000, Glasgow: 88SB 123066, £19,996, Hertfordshire: 35NN 900782, £20,000, Staf*fordshire: 14QP 217711, £5,350, Camden: 6NB* 130001, £20,000, Berkshire: 23HT 614540, £20,000, West Sussex: 77SF 842056, £15,006, Tyne & Wear: 93DP 527786, £20,000, Essex: *47GT 329981, £10,500, West Midlands: 91LP* 882113, £15,932, Aberdeen: 18MZ 338161, £10,215, Harrow: 22QK 012648, £20,000, Hertfordshire: 39GK 064307, £11,012, Devon: 66BN 608193, £11,404, Staffordshire: 39WS 902438, £905, Torfaen: 45WW 296846, £16,180, Dundee: 9FL 590198, £825, Essex: 70QZ 993230, £20,000, Hampshire: 28JP 712012, £20,000, Derbyshire: 66MS 193096, £20,000, Surrey: 58SN 686745, £20,000, Gloucestershire: 94QB 443930, £20,000, Cheshire: 37VW 571001, £19,953, Enfield: 93ST 700621, £20,000, Westminster: 74DN 415796, £19,650, Lancashire: 24HZ 725424, £20,000, Surrey.

David and Margaret Keith, of Lymington, Hampshire, formerly of Dorset, celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of their marriage today.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Ouida (pseudonym of Louise de la Ramel), novelist, Bury St Edmunds, 1839; St Bernadette of Lourdes (Marie-Bernarde Soubirous), Lourdes, 1844; François Poulenc, composer, Paris, 1899.

DEATHS: Catherine of Aragon, *first wife of King Henry VIII*, Kimbolton, Huntingdon, 1536; Allan Ramsay, poet, Edinburgh, 1758; Trevor Howard, actor, 1988; Michinomiya Hirohito, Emperor of Japan 1926-89, Tokyo, 1989.

Glasgow University was founded, 1451.

Francis Bacon became Lord Chancellor of England, 1618.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr A.C. Brown
and Miss J.A. Light
The engagement is announced between Alastair, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Charles Brown, of Heath Farm, Holt, Norfolk, and Julie, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Ronald Light, of Exeter, Devon.

Mr J.G. Brown
and Miss C.L. Foster
The engagement is announced between James, eldest son of Mr and Mrs V.G. Brown, of Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire, and Caroline, daughter of Mr and Mrs R.K. Foster, of Seisdon, South Staffordshire.

Mr F.J. Charlesworth
and Miss T.M.A. Webber
The engagement is announced between James, son of Mr and Mrs Nicholas Charlesworth, of Devoran, Cornwall, and Tiggy, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Webber, of Higher Ashton, Devon.

Mr D.J. de Lara
and Miss B.S. Kay
The engagement is announced between Daniel, younger son of the late Mr Eugene "Johnny" de Lara, of London, and Belinda, daughter of Mr and Mrs Alec Kay, of Hove, Sussex.

Mr E.H.D. Densham
and Miss S.M. Graham
The engagement is announced between Ned, elder son of Mr and Mrs Andrew Densham, of Wrington, North Somerset, and Sarah, daughter of Mr and Mrs James Graham, of Offchurch, Warwickshire.

Dr C.J. Easmon
and Miss E.L.G. Coghill
Sir Toby and Lady Coghill announce the engagement of their daughter, Liza, to Dr Charles J. Easmon.

Captain T.R. Elliott
and Miss B.R. Cropper-Mawer
The engagement is announced between Captain Tim Elliott, BW, son of Colonel Richard Elliott, of Sheffield, South Yorkshire, and Mrs Vivien Elliott-Bertram, of Spilsby, Lincolnshire, and Branwyn Rachel, youngest daughter of Mr Richard Mawer, of Taranaki, New Zealand, and Mrs Fenella Cropper, of Auckland, New Zealand.

Mr C.E. Gilliland
and Miss C.F. Foley
The engagement is announced between Carey Edwin, only son of Mr J. David Gilliland, of Bristol, and Mrs Elizabeth Norris, of Cardiff, and Clare Fiona, only daughter of Mr Iain Reid, of London SW1, and Ms Jane Foley, of London NW6.

Mr S.L. Graffey-Smith
and Miss M.E.E. Parson
The engagement is announced between Simon Laurence, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Roger Graffey-Smith, of Sherborne, Gloucestershire, and Miranda Elizabeth, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Timothy Parson, of Hunstrete, Bristol.

Mr R.E. Hodson
and Miss P.M. Luard
The engagement is announced between Rupert, son of Mr and Mrs Patrick Hodson, of Woodstock, Oxfordshire, and Philippa, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Luard, of Staunton, Gloucestershire.

Mr T.M. Hornor
and Miss A.R.M. Johnston
The engagement is announced between Timothy, only son of Mr and Mrs Harry Hornor, of Ketteringham, Norfolk, and Andrea, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Gordon Johnston, of Kennington, London.

Mr M.J.D. Hulme
and Miss C.L.Y. Ilgrande
The engagement is announced between Matthew, son of Mr and Mrs Douglas Hulme, of Guernsey, Channel Islands, and Caroline, daughter of Mr and Mrs Len Stevens, of Jersey, Channel Islands.

Mr J.J. Hunter
and Miss J.C. Rigby
The engagement is announced between Jeff, son of Mr and Mrs John Hunter, of Weybridge, Surrey, and Joanna, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Rigby, of Guildford, Surrey.

Mr P.F. Lawson Johnston
and Miss A.L. Muir
The engagement is announced between Percy, son of the Hon Harry and Lady Lemina Lawson Johnston, of Aberdeenshire, and Annabel, daughter of Mr and Mrs James Muir, of Northumberland.

Mr I.R. Macleod
and Miss R.L.S. Brown
The engagement is announced between Iain, son of the Hon Torquil Macleod, of London, and Mrs Christopher Cotton, of Clapham, London, and Rebecca, daughter of Mr and Mrs David Brown, of Tetbury, Gloucestershire.

Mr R.E.M. McCreedy
and Miss N.D.O. Wain
The engagement is announced between Mark, eldest son of Mr and Mrs T.E. McCreedy, of Richhill, County Armagh, and Natalie Diana, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs A. Wain, of Hindhead, Surrey.

Mr S.P. Mahony
and Miss C.L. Bridges
The engagement is announced between Sean, son of Mr and Mrs F. Mahony, of Napier, New Zealand, and Charlotte, daughter of Mr and Mrs K. Bridges, of Worcester.

Mr C.A. Musson
and Miss M.J. Sinnott
The engagement is announced between Charles, son of the late Mr Peter Musson and of Mrs Hazel Musson, of East Molesey, Surrey, and Melanie, daughter of Dr Vin Sinnott and Mrs Judith Sinnott, of Zurich, Switzerland.

Mr D.H. Nelson
and Miss S.D. Levine
The engagement is announced between David, son of Mr and Mrs Arthur Nelson, of Albrighton, Shropshire, and Susan, daughter of Mr and Mrs Alan Levine, of Dormans Park, West Sussex.

Mr R.V.K. Pope
and Miss M.G. Govett
The engagement is announced between Rupert, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Pope, of Chicksgrove, Wiltshire, and Marisa, daughter of Mr Peter Govett and Mrs Michael Moore, both of London.

Mr S.C. Price
and Miss V.K. Taylor
The engagement is announced between Simon, son of Mr Tony Price, of Formby, Merseyside, and the late Mrs Christine Price, and Virginia, daughter of Mr David Taylor, of Wallasey, Wirral, and Mrs Pamela Taylor, of Formby.

Mr D.E.A. Sibley
and Mrs A.E. Gomez-Dumontier
The engagement is announced of Angus, elder son of the late D.C.G. Sibley and of Mrs M.M. Sibley, of Ballater, Aberdeenshire, and widower of Elizabeth Ann (née Mattingley), to Aurora, third daughter of the late Mr and Mrs Humberto Gomez, of Bogotá, and widow of Roland C. Dumontier, of Paris.

Mr J.L.C.I. Sanderson
and Miss A.L. Kennett
The engagement is announced between James, eldest son of Mr and Mrs L.A. Sanderson, of Peldon, Essex, and Anthea, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs R.J. Kennett, of Harpenden, Hertfordshire.

Mr R.J. Shepherd
and Miss R.R. Fieth
The engagement is announced between Robert, younger son of Mr David Shepherd, of Castlethorpe, Buckinghamshire, and Mrs June Wilson, of Calderstones, Liverpool, and Rachel, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Clive Fieth, of Tarrington, Herefordshire.

Mr R.J.K. Sloane
and Miss N.E. Bruce-Lockhart
The engagement is announced between Rupert, elder son of Commander and Mrs Timothy Sloane, of Ibstone, Buckinghamshire, and Natasha, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Sandy Bruce-Lockhart, of Headcorn, Kent.

Mr R.A.R. Smith
and Miss D.R.J. Podger
The engagement is announced between Robin, younger son of Major and Mrs G.D.R. Smith, of Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, and Dorcas, daughter of Mr and Mrs F.H.C. Podger, of King's Worthy, Winchester.

Mr W.L. Stephens
and Miss R.E. Grundy
The engagement is announced between William Lawson Stephens, younger son of Mrs Michael Pope, of Donnington, Gloucestershire, and Rose, daughter of Mr and Mrs Nigel Grundy, of Holyport, Berkshire.

Mr E.G.W. Thornhill
and Miss A. Powell
The engagement is announced between Edmund, son of Mr and Mrs Peter Thornhill, of Winthorpe, Nottinghamshire, and Aleksandra, daughter of Mr Robert Powell, of St Mary's, Isles of Scilly, and of the late Mrs J. Wieczorek.

Mr M. Wallis
and Miss C.V. Everitt
The engagement is announced between Matthew, elder son of Mr and Mrs Richard Wallis, of Great Dunmow, and Caroline, daughter of Mr and Mrs James Everitt, of Greatford, Stamford.

Captain P.R.D. Wheeler
and Miss S.C.H. McArt
The engagement is announced between *Captain Patrick Wheeler*, AAC, youngest son of the late Thomas Kennedy Wheeler and of Mrs John Nott, of Lindfield, Sussex, and Sarah Caroline, daughter of Mr and Mrs Leslie McArt, of Sherborne St John, Hampshire.

Mr I.K.J. Woods
and Miss C.D. Arnold
The engagement is announced between Ivan, son of Dr and Mrs J.A. Woods, of Chelsea, London, and Clare, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Arnold, of Chesham, Buckinghamshire.

Marriage

Mr A.J. Butler
and Miss H.M. Lowry
The marriage took place on Thursday, December 31, 1998, in New York, between Mr Alexander Butler, son of Mr and Mrs Godfrey Butler, of Holland Park, London, and Miss Helen Lowry, daughter of Mr and Mrs Thomas Lowry, of Westleigh, Devon.
There will be a reception in London in the Spring.

Britannia Royal Naval College

The Director General Surface Ships/Controller of the Navy (Rear Admiral P. Spencer) took the salute at a Passing Out Parade held at Britannia Royal Naval College (Commodore R.A.G. Clare, Royal Navy) on December 18. A list of Officers who passed out and this term's prize-winners follows:

DIRECT GRADUATE ENTRY, SEAMEN
Sub Lieutenants E J Black: C N Bowen, Sprowston High School, Norwich: J A Buchan, Upton-by-Chester County High School, Cheshire: P M Cable, St Edward's Church of England School, Romford, Essex: S M Forge, Dulwich College, London SE20: J H Green, Skipton Girls' High School, North Yorkshire: M A Hammon, King's School Bruton, Somerset: M M V Hammond, Weaverham High School, Cheshire: C F Hardy, Pershore High School, Worcestershire: L R Hayashi, Mainshead Upper School, Caddington, Beds: J L Holden, Codsell High School, Staffordshire: S R Hubschmid, Dillwynllewelyn, Cockett, Swansea: P J Hudson, Royal Grammar School, Newcastle upon Tyne: S P Kelly, Royal Grammar School, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne: K L Macrae, Crosshall High School, Ormskirk, Lancs: B R O'Malley, King Edward's School, Epsom, Surrey: S J Parry, Rosebery School, Epsom, Surrey: C P Sanderson, Mearns Academy, Laurencekirk, Aberdeenshire: L D Sharp, St Joseph's School, Workington, Cumbria: D J Slattery, Vale of Catbose College, Oakham, Leics: C D Sudding, Langley Park School for Girls, Beckenham, Kent: C F L Tok, Bishop Challoner Girls' School, London E1: S J Wheeler, Cambridge College for Sixth Form Students, Cambridge: L J Willis, Davison High School, Worthing, Sussex: C H Wood, Cranbrook School, Kent.

NAVAL COLLEGE ENTRY, SEAMEN
Sub Lieutenants P I Barnes, Walbottle High School, Newcastle upon Tyne: R H McCurrach, Droitwich High School, Worcestershire: G T Wragg, North Kesteven School, Hykeham, Lincoln. Midshipmen S J Chapman, St Mary's Roman Catholic High School, Chesterfield: R J Filmore, The Royal Belfast Academical Institute, Northern Ireland: C P Perryment, St Felix School, Suffolk: D P Wilkins, Corfe Hills School, Broadstone, Dorset.

DIRECT GRADUATE ENTRY, ENGINEERS
Sub Lieutenants M P Ball, Cockshut Hill Secondary School, Yardley, Birmingham: P A Mortlock, Wirral Grammar School, Bebington, Wirral: K I Orr, Hutcheson's Grammar School, Glasgow.

NAVAL COLLEGE ENTRY, ENGINEERS
Sub Lieutenants R F Casson, Deacons School, Peterborough: J A Elliott, Court Moor, Fleet, Hants: A S Foote, Northgate High School, Ipswich, Suffolk: D W Paton, Trinity House School, Hull: S R Pickard, Durrington High School, Worthing, West Sussex: P K A Reeves, Bath College of Further Education, Bath: A P Richardson, Adwick High School, Doncaster: M A Rooney, St Paul's Roman Catholic Secondary School, Urmston, Manchester: R M K Welsh, Belmont Academy, Ayr, Scotland.

DIRECT GRADUATE ENTRY, ENGINEER (Training Management)
Lieutenants D P Bennett, Hebron School, Tamil Nadu, South India: C T McGinley, St Columbus High School, Clydebank: K D Smith, Newquay Tretherras, Newquay, Cornwall.

DIRECT GRADUATE ENTRY, SUPPLY
Sub Lieutenants K M Ames, Penair School, Truro, Cornwall: P N Carcone, Old Machar Academy, Aberdeen: G R Carter, Marple Ridge High School, Stockport: T P Cutler, The Dixie Grammar School, Leicestershire: S B Meardon, Oakdene School, Beaconsfield, Bucks: S J Oliver, Brockhill Park School, Hythe, Kent: I J Pritchard, Lewis Girls' School, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed: J B Weare, Berkhamsted Collegiate, Hertfordshire.

NAVAL COLLEGE ENTRY, SUPPLY
Sub Lieutenants D J Gosling, Duston Upper School, Northampton: A J Richards, Bembridge School, Isle of Wight. Midshipman A Burston, Alsager Comprehensive School, Stoke on Trent.

DIRECT GRADUATE ENTRY, 92 FLIGHT PILOTS
Sub Lieutenants E S Adams, Richard Lander School, Truro, Cornwall: C J Andrews, Queen Elizabeth's School, Wimborne, Dorset: C M Cannell, Forest School, nr Snaresbrook, London: M Cornford, Buckler's Mead School, Yeovil, Somerset: T C Davies, Oaklands Roman Catholic School, Waterlooville, Hants: C S H Griffiths, Royal Manor School, Portland, Dorset: B J Lloyd, Kingham Hill School, Oxford: N J Moore, The Judd School, Tonbridge, Kent: J Morse, Ludlow Church of England School, Shropshire: M J Rowson, Meole Brace School, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

NAVAL COLLEGE ENTRY, 92 FLIGHT PILOTS
Sub Lieutenant A J Summers, Queen Mary's College, Basingstoke. Midshipmen D R L Bouyac, Wick High School, Caithness, Scotland: J Green, Sunnydale Comprehensive School, Shildon, County Durham: J H Wells, Gravesend Grammar School, Kent.

DIRECT GRADUATE ENTRY, 92 FLIGHT OBSERVERS
Sub Lieutenants S Beveridge, Daniel Stewarts and Melville College, Edinburgh: Murgatroyd, Helston Sixth Form, Cornwall: J A Scott, Ackworth Quaker School, Pontefract, West Yorkshire.

NAVAL COLLEGE ENTRY, 92 FLIGHT OBSERVER
Sub Lieutenants S P Anderson, Marr College, Ayrshire, Scotland: E J Ward, Repton School, Derbyshire.

DIRECT GRADUATE ENTRY, 92 FLIGHT (AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER)
Sub Lieutenant P M Pine, St Boniface College, Plymouth.

INTERNATIONALS ENTRY 98/2
Sub Lieutenant H O Redman. Midshipmen O M Al Awadhi: N B Al Buhairi: K M S Al Kaabi: K S S Al Kaabi: S B Al Ketbi: A H Al Muhairbi: M A K Jasem. G A S Owels: T Pasi.

SPECIAL DUTIES COURSE 98/3
Lieutenant J G Rennie, Alva Academy, Clackmannanshire, Scotland. Sub Lieutenants S W Bell, Dumfries Academy, Dumfries: T W Brady, Lismore School, Northern Ireland: S G Brown, Queen's School, Bushey, Hertfordshire: M Clarke, Wingfield Comprehensive, Rotherham, South Yorkshire: E L Cotton, The John Warner School, Hoddesdon, Herts: S P Daniels, Rivington Road School, St Helens, Lancashire: A M Darville, Yellow Elder Gardens, Bahamas: JM Gallimore, Ilkley Grammar School, West Yorkshire: S D Godfrey, John Smeaton High School, Leeds: D A Henfield, Abaco Central High School, Bahamas: N J Jayes, City of Leicester School, Leicester: S S Jones, Lisburn Technical School, Northern Ireland: T M Jones, Durrington School, Near Salisbury, Wilts: K E J Meikle, Hull Trinity House, Whitefriar, Hull: V Milburn, Handsworth New Road School, Birmingham: P Northeast, John Griffiths' Comprehensive School, Wimbledon, London: N A Prest, Sydney Smith High School, Hull: A D Ross, John Mason School, Abingdon, Oxon: S J Somerville, Lyndon Comprehensive School, Solihull, West Midlands: A Tutchings, Alderbrook School, Solihull, West Midlands: S P Wells, Nunnery Wood High School, Worcester: N R Wood, St Andrew's Church School, Worthing, West Sussex.

PRIZES AWARDED:

NAVAL GENERAL TRAINING PRIZES:
Prize for the Top Special Duties Officer, Sub Lieutenant Brown.

ACADEMIC PRIZES:
Top Graduate in end of course exams, Sub Lieutenant Bussey.
Top Naval College Entrant in end of course exams, Midshipman Jones.
Wallrock Shield and Tankard to top Fleet Air Arm Young Officer, Sub Lieutenant Dransfield.
Top Fleet Air Arm Young Officer in Academic Exams, Sub Lieutenant Corrie and Sub Lieutenant Hughes.
Top International Officer in Academic Exams, Midshipman Shahyari.
Defence Studies Prize, Sub Lieutenant Parry.
Lloyds Bank Award for Endeavour is presented to officers who have shown considerable endeavour in their first two terms and have made a significant contribution to the life of the College. The prizes were presented by Mr Patrick Jenkins of Lloyds Bank Management Team. First prize, Sub Lieutenant Hammond. Second prize, Sub Lieutenant Pritchard.
Armourers and Brasiers' Livery Company prizes to Engineering Officers on the Engineering Scholarship Scheme, Sub Lieutenant Ellis and Sub Lieutenant Jones.
Captain Initial Sea Training's Prize, the Young Officer who demonstrated the most positive attitude towards Initial Sea Training, Sub Lieutenant Weare.

COMMODORE'S PRIZES:
The Commodore presented personal prizes of pictures to the Senior Young Officers in the college, in recognition of their contribution to the overall running of the college administration: Special Duties Course President, Hawke Squadron Sub Lieutenant, Sub Lieutenant Daniels; St Vincent Squadron Sub Lieutenant, Sub Lieutenant Rogers; Cunningham Squadron Sub Lieutenant, Midshipman Ainsley; Senior International Officer, Midshipman Azam; Senior Sub Lieutenant, Sub Lieutenant Bussey; Commodore's Prize, Sub Lieutenant McLockhin.

The Scriptures say that no one who has faith will be disappointed, no matter if that person is a Jew or a Gentile. There is only one Lord, and he is generous to everyone who asks for his help. All who call out to the Lord will be saved. Romans 10.11-13 (CEV).

BIRTHS

BARTLEET - On December 23rd to Rebecca Frances (née Bone) and Thomas Grahame, a son, Edwin Thomas.

BURKE/McMANUS - On November 24th to Suzanne McManus and Harry Burke, a son, Charles Gerald.

ELVIN - On December 30th 1998 at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, to Emma (née Halpin) and Julian, a wonderful son, Jack Peel.

HOLMAN-BAIRD - To Richard and Polly on 29th December 1998, a daughter Amelia, a sister for Angus and Louise.

KENNEDY-MILNE - On December 12th at The Portland Hospital to Karen (*née Morris*) and William, a loved and welcome son, Alan Angus. Avise La Fin.

LAITHWAITE - On 30th December 1998 to Marcus and Jessica in Sidney, Australia, a son, Hugo Charles Richard.

LITTLEHALES - On January 3rd 1999, at home, to Katy (née McKay) and Philip, a daughter Jemima Jessica, a sister for Mathilda.

LUKASH - On 29th December 1998 to Sonia and Magnus Smith, a son, Cameron Craig Henderson.

MADDISON - To Daniel and Karen (née Franklin) on January 5th, a son, Alexander Daniel.

MAGGS - So precious and awaited, Aaron James arrived on New Years Day, a son for proud parents Annette and Andy.

MAGNIER-BROWN - On January 3rd at The Portland Hospital to Corinne and Richard, a daughter, Jessica - a thumbs down on the Dodo's mode.

NIHAT - On January 3rd at The Portland Hospital to Fernur Ece (Musal) and Noyan, a daughter, Yasemin Ece.

PRUDHAM - Dr and Mrs R Prudham are proud to announce the safe arrival of baby Matthew James Lloyd Prudham on 30th December 1998.

BIRTHS

ROBINSON - On 3rd January 1999 at Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle upon Tyne, to Giovanna (née Bianco) and Marcus, a son, Frederick Newton.

SMITH-GORDON - On December 22nd 1998 in Singapore to Kumi (*née* Suzuki) and Lionel, a son, Lionel Henry Yuji (to be known as Henry).

WILLIAMS - On 1st January 1999, to Olivia and Trelawny, a son, Merlin Francis, a brother for Amber.

WOOD - On 2nd January 1999, to Sophie and Mark, a son, Sebastian Charles Derrington Eaton, a brother for Hugo, Fabian and Theodore.

DEATHS

ANDERSON - On the 31st December, peacefully at home, Muriel Anderson, much loved by all her family. Funeral Service to be held on Friday January 15th at 10.30am in St. Mary's Church, Dartmouth Park Road, NW5. Family flowers only, but donations if desired to the National Gallery, Trafalgar Square.

BISHOP - Elizabeth Finlay (Lady Bishop). Peacefully on 3rd January aged 83 years. Beloved wife of Sir Frederick Bishop, CB, CVO, and devoted mother and grandmother. Funeral Service at St. Mary the Virgin, Bramshott, Liphook, Hampshire, at 2.30pm Tuesday 12th January, for family and local friends. Family flowers only please.

BLACKBURN - Suddenly at home in North Walsham, on January 1st, Professor Ruth Harriett Blackburn Ph.d. Will be greatly missed by all her friends. Funeral Service at St. Nicholas Church, North Walsham, Norfolk on Saturday January 16th at 9.45am, followed by cremation. Flowers to Murrell Cork Funeral Directors, Mundesley Road, North Walsham, by 8.30am please.

DEATHS

BLAKE - William (Bill) on January 2nd 1999 at The Royal Free Hospital after a stroke. Much loved brother of Vicki and brother in law of Ronnie. Cremation at Golders Green 12.15 pm 14th January. Family flowers only please, donations if desired to Age Concern. Flowers to M.M. Broed and Son Funeral Directors, 12 Woodside Lane N12.

BUTCHER - On 5th January. Peacefully at home in Lincoln in her sleep, Mary (Mac). Beloved wife of Dr Humphrey Butcher. R.I.P.

CHAPMAN - Tennant Brand recently returned to the UK from Spain, died suddenly on 31st December 1998 in Malvern. Funeral at Malvern Priory, Monday 11th January at 1.45pm. Family flowers only, donations to Malvern Macmillan Nurses Fund.

CLARINGBULL - Enid *Dorothy Phyllis (née* Lambert), of Brent Knoll, peacefully on January 4th in her 91st year. Beloved wife of the late Sir Frank and mother to Roger and Margaret. Funeral Service St Andrew's Church, Burnham-on-Sea, Tuesday 12th January at 12 noon. Family flowers only, donations if desired, for John Grooms Association for Disabled People to Messrs. P J Harris Funeral Directors 2 Cross Street, Burnham-on-Sea Somerset Tel: 01278 782886.

COATS - Bruce Martin Birkmyre Coats, OBE, on January 1st 1999 peacefully after a short illness. Funeral at Mortlake Crematorium, Mortlake on Friday January 15th at 12.30pm. Family flowers only, donations may be made to The Royal Humane Society, Brettenham House, Lancaster Place, WC2E 7EP.

CORNISH - "Billee", on January 1st, aged 92. Beloved widow of Percy, dear grandmother of Roland and Michael and dear great-grandmother of Theodore and George. Enquiries to W Smith & Sons, Bransgore (01425-674595). Family flowers only. Donations to the RNLI appreciated.

CROUCH - Grace on January 4th peacefully following a long and courageous fight. Loving wife of James and beloved of Graham, Jackie, Sue and grandchildren and all who knew her. Funeral Service at St Mary the Virgin, Hayes, on Wednesday 13th January at 9.30 am followed by private cremation. Family flowers only please; donations to the Salvation Army c/o J & R Killick & Sons West Wickham, Kent Tel: 0181 7774502.

DAVIES - Ralph Anthony (Tony) peacefully with dignity and courage at home on 2nd January 1999, aged 78 years. Husband of Rosemary and father of Peter, Joyce, Paul and Theresa. Funeral details from Goald and Chapman (01428) 604436. Family flowers only please but donations if desired to the Royal British Legion.

DRURY - Katherine Holland, peacefully in London on January 4th, beloved mother of Lewis and grandmother of Benji and Tim. Funeral Service at 4.45pm, Friday 8th January, Putney Vale Crematorium, London.

EAGLE BOTT - On January 5th 1999, peacefully in Highfield's Nursing Home, Halesworth Suffolk, Margaret Elizabeth (Lizzie), in her 94th year, a good friend to many. Funeral Service at St. Andrew's Church, Wissett on Wednesday January 13th at 12 noon, followed by interment in the churchyard. No flowers but donations to St. Andrew's Church, Wissett may be sent c/o Woolnoughs Funeral Service, The Chapel's, Holton Road, Halesworth, Suffolk.

GALLAGHER - Dr. Kevin Joseph of 9 Willowbrook Gardens, Mayals, Swansea, suddenly on 3rd January at his home. Dearly loved husband of Glalinde and darling father to Derdre, Fiona, Christof, Dominic, Ronan, Ursula, Damian and Fergus. Dear father-in-law of Richard, Andrew, Nonie, Carolyn and Georgina. Adored and adoring Papa of Joanna, Jenny, Kate, Isla, Rachael, Sophie, Niamh, Thomas and Annabel. Requiem Mass at St David's Priory, Swansea on Friday 8th January at 12.30 pm followed by interment at Oystermouth Cemetery. Flowers to St Davids or donations if desired to Oxfam c/o Phillip G Davies Fforest Funeral Service 155, Ravenhill Road, Fforest Fach, Swansea SA5 5AH. Tel: 01792 581938

GREGSON - Katherine, late of Benenden, passed peacefully away on 2nd January aged 90 years. Funeral Service to be held at Benenden Church, on Wednesday 13th January at 2.00pm. Family flowers only, donations for St. George's Church, Benenden at the service or via T.W. Fuggle and Son, 20 Ashford Road, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6QU. Tel:01580 763340.

GWYN REES - Margaret age 95 on 31st December. Much loved mother of Roland and Peter. Service Chilterns Crematorium 12th January 2.00 pm.

GWYNN - Brian Purnell. On 4th January, 1999, in his 80th year. Dearly loved husband of Jennifer. Funeral Service at Putney Vale Crematorium at 11.30am on Friday 15th January. Family flowers only.

HALLINAN - On January 5th 1999, peacefully in her 99th year at the St. Laurence Cheshire Home, Cork, Lady Monica Hallinan (née Waters) of Midleton, widow of Sir Eric and devoted mother of Edward and Beth. Deeply mourned by all her loving family; Louise, Rupert, Dominic, Camilla, Harriet, Stephen, Matilda and Patrick, Alba, Isabel, Harry and Evie. Funeral Mass at 2.00pm on Saturday January 9th in the Church of the Most Holy Rosary, Midleton. Burial afterwards at adjoining cemetery. Family flowers only, donations if wished to Cork Cheshire Home. "Requiescat in Pace."

HALPIN - Kathleen Mary CBE - peacefully at home, on January 4th, aged 95. Much loved and admired friend of a dwindling band of contemporaries and aunt of Patrick, Robert and Joanna. Private cremation - *family flowers* only. Any donations to Macmillan Cancer Relief c/o Leverton & Sons Limited, 212 Eversholt Street, London, NW1 1BD (Tel: 0171 387 6075). Memorial Service at St John's Wood Church, NW8 to be arranged.

HARFORD - Phyll "Mop" (née Crookenden). On 3rd January. Funeral Service, 11.30am Friday 8th January. Uley Church, Gloucestershire. No flowers.

HARPER - Emma Anne died suddenly but peacefully at home on 20th December 1998 aged 83. Wife of the late Roland and mother of Vicky. Funeral service (Humanist) January 15th at Oxford Crematorium at 9:30 am. No flowers by request, if desired donations to RSPCA c/o Fields Seymour Parkes, 0118 9391011.

HUBAND - James E. Barham (Joe) T.D., died December 31st 1998. Special to Glenda, Lynda and Roma and his four grandsons. Private family only committal. No letters please. Family flowers but donations if wished to the Samaritans. "Any man's death diminishes one."

HUMPHREYS - Anthony passed away very suddenly on 23rd December 1998. Much loved husband of Anne and father of Sarah and Robert, and devoted grandfather of Peter, Alex and Anna. Cremation took place on 5th January at *Eastbourne Crematorium*. Donations if desired to League of Friends, Conquest Hospital, c/o Mummery F/D., Bexhill, Tel: 01424 730418.

KOENIGSBERGER - Otto. Architect Planner died peacefully on 3rd January 1999 aged 90 years. Further inquiries to Leverton & Sons Tel 0181 455 4992.

LAWMAN - Thomas Michael Anthony beloved husband of Molly, Papa of David, Michael and Nicholas and grandfather of six, died on 4th January 1999. Funeral will take place on Monday 11th January at Woking Crematorium at 3.30pm. Family flowers only.

LEACH - Elizabeth, Tweedale suddenly but peacefully at home on 31st December. Fondly remembered by her extended family and friends. Thanksgiving Service at Donhead St. Mary Parish Church on Friday 15th January at 12 noon. No flowers or mourning please. All enquiries to Merefield & Henstridge Funeral *Directors. Tel: Shaftesbury* (01747) - 853532.

MACKENZIE - Rowena Anne (née Marshall) died suddenly on 3rd January 1999. Dearly loved mother of Anthony and Catriona and much loved Gogi, grandmother of Roddy, Gavin, Abigail, Joanna and William. Funeral Service at St Mary's Church, *Streatley, Berkshire* on Saturday 9th January at 2.30pm. Family flowers only.

MARSHALL - Suddenly but peacefully at Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh on 1st January 1999, Marjorie Anne, née Marriott, dear wife of the late Charles, mother of Sally, mother-*in-law of Jim and* grandmother of Robin, David and Alastair. Service at Mortonhall Crematorium Pentland Chapel on Friday 8th January at 1.45 pm to which all friends are invited.

METHVEN - Donald, on 4th January, aged 84. Very dearly loved husband of Pam and much loved father of Susie, Colin and Annabelle and his seven grandchildren. Funeral Service at Salisbury Crematorium on Wednesday 13th January at 12.20pm. *Family flowers* only please but donations to Alzheimer's Disease Society (Salisbury Branch) may be sent c/o I.N. Newman Ltd, Griffin House, 55 Winchester Street, Salisbury SP1 1HL. Service of Thanksgiving in London to be announced later.

MICHELL - Honor, on 5th January peacefully at home at Hartfield, East Sussex. Widow of Bruce and mother of Nicholas. Funeral on 13th January at 2.00pm at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Hartfield. Family flowers only please.

MOTTRAM - Guy Read aged 24 on 4th January 1999 peacefully in hospital. Dearly loved son of Tina and Anthony *and brother* to Petra and Sophia. Thanksgiving Service at All Saints Church, Witley on Saturday 9th January at 2.00 pm. Family flowers only.

MUDIE - Katherine Margaret Couper "Cheerie". Peacefully in hospital on December 31st 1998, aged 83 years. Dear aunt, great aunt and great great aunt. *Private cremation.* Memorial Service at the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Aldeburgh, Suffolk on Wednesday, January 13th 1999 at 12 noon. No flowers please. Donations if desired to Listening Books, 12 Lant Street, London SE1 1QH.

PAINTER - Joyce Rosa (Revd. Joyce Knee) widow of Reginald Alfred Painter, stepmother of Pat, the late Molly and Gillian, much loved step-mother and great-grandmother passed away 29th December. All enquiries to Heritage & Sons 01494 434484.

PARKINSON - The Reverend Edward James. Peacefully in Church on Sunday 3rd January. Funeral Service at Christchurch, Julian Road, Bath on Wednesday 13th January at 2.00pm. Family flowers only but donations for Christchurch Organ Restoration Fund, may be sent to The Parish Office Christchurch, Julian Road, Bath, BA1 2RH.

PRIOR - On 4th January at The Mellowes N.H., Althea, very much loved wife of Christopher and mother of Kate and Ursula. Funeral 3.00pm on 13th January at Compton Abbas. No flowers please.

RACE - Vida Joyce (née Davis), formerly of Clarence Gate Gardens, NW1. Peacefully on December 31st 1998, aged 89 years. Funeral at Putney Vale Crematorium, Monday January 11th, 12 noon.

SANDBERG - Diana Margaret Ina (née Hirst) peacefully on New Years day at the Quinta Nursing Home, Bentley in Hampshire. Mother of Alexander and Patrick and beloved grandmother. Funeral Service on Friday, January 8th at th Holy Rood Church in Holybourne, Alton at 11:30 am. Family flowers only please, but donations to any cancer charity would be appreciated.

SEABORN - Herbert 1925-1998 died whilst skiing on Christmas day. Funeral to take place at St. Margaret's Church, Putney, on Monday 11th January 1999 at 1.30 pm. Family flowers only.

SNEESBY - Roy died on New Year's Day at home in Johannesburg, South Africa, after a long illness bravely endured, at the age of 73. He is survived by his wife Audrey, son Bob (Tel: 0171 937 4657) and daughter Jacqui.

STILLINGFLEET - John Reginald, aged 67, died peacefully on 4th January 1999 at Wycombe General Hospital. Funeral Service at 10.00 am on 12th January at the Chilterns Crematorium, Amersham. Flowers or donations if preferred to Cancer Research. All enquiries to Heritage and Sons 01494 434484.

THOMPSON - Lillian Elizabeth died peacefully on January 1st. Widow of Alfred Charles and beloved mother of Anne-Marie and son-in-law Jeffrey A. Jannuzzo. Donations: The Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability, West Hill, Putney, London SW15 3SW. to establish the Lillian Thompson Nursing Fund. Funeral January 9th 12 noon St. Saviours, Grand Drive, Raynes Park, London, S.W.20.

TREGONING - On 5th January 1999, peacefully in hospital, Monica, of Canford Cliffs, Poole, and late of Ferryside, South Wales. A much loved aunt, great-aunt and great-great-aunt. Private family cremation at 9.30am on Thursday 14th January at *Poole Crematorium. All* welcome to lunch at the Haven Hotel, Banks Road, Sandbanks, Poole at 12 noon followed by a memorial service at 2.00pm in the Chapel of St. Nicolas, Panorama Road, Sandbanks. Donations in aid of Poole Hospital NHS Trust (Medical & Surgical Fund) and family flowers to Deric-Scott, Portman *Lodge Funeral Home*, 755 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, BH7 6AN.

WALMSLEY - Alison Elizabeth (née Marshall), aged 83, peacefully in Oxford. Much loved mother and grandmother, widow of Rev. Alec Walmsley. Service at St Mary's Cheltenham 12 noon Friday 15th January. Family flowers only, donations if desired to Mothers Union (Oxford Diocese) c/o Co-operative Funeral Service, 2 Hendred Street, Cowley, Oxford OX4 2ED.

WEST - On the 2nd January 1999 in his 90th year, the Right Reverend Francis Horner West, sometime Bishop of Taunton. Dearly loved by his wife Beryl, his children Frances and Roger and his grandchildren William and Laura. Funeral Service will be held at St. Michael's Church, Aldbourne on Wednesday 13th January 1999 at 12 noon. Interment of ashes in Dinder Churchyard, Somerset at a later date. Family flowers only, but donations for either St. Michael's P.C.C. or Ramsbury Surgery (cheque payable to 'Ramsbury and Wanborough Equipment Fund') will be received by Thomas Free & Sons Ltd, The Parade, Marlborough, Wilts SN8 1NE. Tel:01672 512110.

WOOLF - Germaine aged 89, on 26th December 1998 at home after a long illness. Wife of the late Cyril Woolf, mother of Diane and Roma, loving grandmother and great-grandmother.

OBITUARIES

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL PAUL RIVIERE

Lieutenant-Colonel Paul Rivière, OBE, MM, of the French Resistance, died on December 16 aged 86. He was born on November 22, 1912.

As the Resistance officer responsible on the ground for handling the RAF's parachuting, landing and pickup operations in the southern half of France in 1943-44, Paul Rivière was responsible for the reception into France and the return to England of more agents than any other similar Free French controller. The landings of SOE agents were made the more perilous when it was decided to supplement the Lysander, with its spectacularly short landing and take-off, by the much larger and heavier Hudson bomber, which, modified as a troop carrier, could bring in and retrieve many more agents at once.

But Hudson operations, though more effective, also involved greater danger. Whereas the Lysander, even well laden, could be airborne within a hundred yards and could land and take off on dimly marked grass strips by the aid of its own landing lights, the Hudson required up to five times this length with a 450-metre long flare-path of electric torches for night landings.

In carrying out his duties, Rivière had to travel all over the enemy-occupied area between Switzerland, Bordeaux, the Pyrenees and the Mediterranean by car, train and bicycle, journeys made the more dangerous as he was frequently carrying arms, large sums of money or wireless equipment. Yet his astonishing coolness and courage carried him through the controls.

Like his father, Paul Claude Marie Rivière had been a schoolmaster before the war, but in 1939 he was mobilised as an instructor of cavalry cadets at Saumur. In June 1940 he fought for three days to hold up the German crossing of the Loire.

In the wake of the defeat of France he joined Henri Frenay's resistance movement, *Combat*, at the end of 1941. At first he distributed clandestine news sheets before, in June 1942, conducting his first parachute operation, the reception of a saboteur and six heavy containers. Soon afterwards he was arrested for distributing propaganda and but was given a prison sentence of only four months, which he served in a Vichy prison in Lyons.

In November he helped to receive a Lysander bringing 20 million francs for Jean Moulin, the former prefect of the Eure et Loire department who had remained in France and become de Gaulle's Unifier of the Resistance. In April 1943 he helped Bruno Larat, the head of air and sea operations for the previously unoccupied zone of France, to receive a Hudson, which returned in the following month to take eight agents to England, including Rivière, who was to have a programme of training by the SOE, the RAF and the Free French. This was to include the vital training in organising Hudson landings. On the occasion of the June landing Hudson's flarepath of electric torches was laid out by Larat, helped by Geneviève Fassin (Jannik) whom Rivière later married.

While Rivière was in England Larat was arrested and Rivière was selected to replace him. His programme of training had to be curtailed so that


Rivière: risky clandestine operations in occupied France

he could be parachuted into France as soon as possible after he was qualified to receive Hudson landings. In his role as Head of the Section for Landing and Parachute Operations (SAP) he had to find suitably large and level meadows remote from German troops, have them accepted by the Air Ministry by coded wireless telegrams and recruit local teams to form "reception committees". He also had to organise secure hospitality for passengers before and after operations, and arrange clandestine movements for all involved at times when any movement was forbidden by the Germans.

In each moonlit period from July to October 1943 Rivière received at least one Hudson landing, by crews from No 161 Special Duties Squadron. In October alone three Hudsons landed on his fields, to carry to England 26 people including Resistance and Maquis leaders. Among the most important passengers were Vincent Auriol, a future President of France, and General de Lattre de Tassigny, one of the four Allied Commanders who later took the surrender of Germany.

For several of these Hudson pick-ups Rivière's assistant was Jannik. In one, in some confusion about where the aircraft would touch down, he found himself flat on the ground with one main wheel rolling through the grass on each side of him. Luckily the tail wheel had not yet touched the ground. In the morning one of the gendarmes investigating the incident for the Vichy authorities found Rivière's spectacles, pipe and torch and surreptitiously returned them to him.

The penultimate Hudson pickup supervised by Rivière almost came to grief when a hard frost gave way to a sudden thaw, making the ground perilously soft. Nevertheless the desperate situation of the two agents to be picked up — Raymond Aubrac, a member of de Gaulle's Consultative Assembly in Algiers, had just escaped from a Gestapo prison and his wife Lucie was about to give birth — seemed to justify the risk. In the event the Hudson was stuck in mud for two and a half-hours, in spite of all the efforts of local villagers and their horses, but it eventually got clear ahead of the Gestapo.

The last Hudson received by Rivière was in May 1944 and this time it took him back to England. In British archives it was recorded of him: "No other organiser in France was of greater help to his British colleagues in the field."

He next joined de Gaulle's secret service as a lieutenant-colonel. After the war he joined the regular army and retained that rank until 1962, serving in Indo-China, Germany and Japan, where he was Military Attaché from 1956 to 1959, when he became responsible for Military Security in Algeria. In 1962 he was elected Gaullist Deputy for the Loire, holding his seat until 1978. While a member of Parliament he was concerned especially with the defence budget. He was also a delegate to the Council of Europe, where he and his wife were very popular with British and other delegates.

In retirement he and Jannik lived happily at his native village, Montagny (of which he served for some years as mayor) in the big house he had built. They also had a flat in Paris, from which they could easily visit their friends in England. Besides his British decorations (Officer of the Order of the British Empire and Military Medal), Rivière was a Companion of the Liberation and a Commander of the Legion of Honour. He was also decorated by Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

His wife predeceased him. He leaves three sons and a daughter.

JERRY QUARRY

Jerry Quarry, American heavyweight boxer, died of pneumonia in Templeton, California, on January 3 aged 53, having suffered from dementia pugilistica for many years. He was born in Los Angeles on May 15, 1945.

ALTHOUGH he earned more than $2 million in the boxing ring and had some good quality victories in the 1970s, notably over Floyd Patterson and the British and European champion Jack Bodell, Jerry Quarry will be best remembered for one of his defeats, that by Muhammad Ali in 1970. It was not that the fight was a classic. Quarry was stopped on cuts in the third round after providing some useful range-finding and target practice for Ali. But the occasion was the former world champion's return to the ring after a three-and-a-half-year enforced lay-off, and the boxing public was agog to see what effect this inactivity might have on his remarkable powers.

The heavyweight division had acquired a new champion in the person of the ferocious knockout specialist Joe Frazier. The question on all lips was whether Ali, with so many personal, financial and religious problems to distract him over the previous 40 months, still had the stomach for ring combat at that level. "Irish" Jerry Quarry was certainly no pushover. In the aftermath of Ali's being stripped of his crown for refusing the draft, he had only narrowly lost a 15-round points decision against Jimmy Ellis for the World Boxing Association title. A hard counterpuncher, he was at that time ranked No 3 in the world.

In the event, Ali earned a victory at the end of three rounds as blood from a cut caused the referee to rule Quarry unfit to continue. But, though welcomed ecstatically by the former champion's fans, the result contained for the more knowledgeable members of his camp some worrying statistics. Principal among these was that before the clash of heads which caused the cut, Quarry had been dramatically improving the percentage of punches he laid on Ali with every minute the fight went by. In the third Quarry had hurt Ali with body punches and at the end he was far from cowed by him. It was only the sight of his opponent's blood that at the end pumped fresh life into a rapidly tiring Ali.

Jerry Quarry was born in Los Angeles into a family of Irish descent. Two of his brothers were to become boxers, one a world title contender as a light heavyweight. He


Under fire: Quarry on the end of a right from Ali on their first meeting in 1970

had a hard childhood as his father moved from state to state in pursuit of labouring work. But the ring provided him with the means to better himself and after turning professional he won his first 20 fights before dropping a ten rounds points decision to the highly-fancied Eddie Machen in 1966.

In the following year he beat the former world champion Floyd Patterson on points, thus qualifying himself for the elimination contest to find a successor to Ali, who had by then been stripped of his world title. By this time he was regarded as something of a "white hope" in an era in which black boxers dominated the heavyweight division. In February 1968 Quarry stopped Thad Spencer in three rounds to earn himself a shot at Jimmy Ellis's World Boxing Association title.

In April that year he was narrowly outpointed by Ellis over 15 rounds in Oakland, California, but in June 1969 he was back for another world title tilt, this time at Joe Frazier's World Boxing Council version of the crown. In the event, Frazier stopped him in seven rounds in New York and proceeded to unify the world heavyweight title by hammering Ellis to defeat in four rounds in February 1970.

In October that year Quarry went to Atlanta, Georgia, for his famous meeting with Ali, an encounter which left him feeling aggrieved at his propensity to cut so easily, but by no means daunted at the possibility of meeting Ali again should the opportunity arise. As a contender he was certainly no journeyman, merely to be disposed of by serious men on their way to a title shot.

Indeed, the gulf between a boxer such as he was and Europe's best was harshly demonstrated at the Empire Pool, Wembley, in November 1971 when he took on the British and European champion, Jack Bodell. Fragrant pre-fight visions of the title opportunities opening up for Bodell should he win were brutally dispelled within seconds of the first bell. Determined to show a fine aggression for the British fans, Bodell floundered gamely forwards but was soon bouncing off the ropes under the sheer savagery of Quarry's punches. Bodell's tactics suited the counterpunching Irish American perfectly, and within a few more seconds a perfect hook to the head had the European champion on his knees. Bodell rose immediately and swung his southpaw right. But it was a move of desperation. Quarry whipped over his own right and Bodell was rolling on the canvas to be counted out. There were 64 seconds on the timekeeper's watch.

Although he continued to challenge in the toughest company, Quarry never really prospered thereafter. He challenged Muhammad Ali again, but was again stopped by cuts, though this time in seven rounds. However in 1973 he had two good wins, outpointing Ron Lyle and then flattening the big-punching Ernie Shavers in one round. He next fought Frazier for the second time but, though Frazier had by then (1974) surrendered his world crown to the even more menacing George Foreman, he was still too strong and too rough for Quarry, and gave the Irish American a severe beating over seven rounds. After a further defeat, at the hands of Ken Norton, Quarry announced his retirement in 1975.

He was several times lured out of retirement — the last time preposterously in 1992 at the age of 47, in the vain belief that he might emulate George Foreman's return to the ring in middle age. For a purse of $1,050 he was battered senseless over six rounds by a nonentity in an unlicensed club fight.

By that time drink and drugs had, anyway, eroded his powers beyond all recognition, quite apart from the damage he had sustained in the ring. And when he was examined by a neuropsychologist five years ago he was found to be in an advanced state of dementia. Latterly he had been looked after by his mother and elder brother. A younger brother had also suffered fearsome injuries while boxing at light heavyweight.

Quarry was three times married and divorced. He leaves three children.

DOROTHY BARTON

Dorothy Williams Barton, surgeon, died on December 11 aged 100. She was born in Birkenhead on May 14, 1898.

WHEN Dorothy Williams decided to enter the male-dominated world of surgery, it did not occur to her that her sex might be a barrier to success. Years later she was to tell friends that her resolve was strengthened by her father, an insurance broker, who held the then eccentric opinion that daughters should be as well educated as sons.

Her enthusiasm for a career in medicine meant that setbacks only served to sharpen her determination — a characteristic which was put to the test early. At the age of seven, while on holiday on a farm in Herefordshire, she ignored her parents' embargo on playing with machinery and experimented with a threshing machine, severing part of her thumb. As there was no telephone on the farm, she was taken to Hereford in a pony and trap, a journey of ten miles, in the hope of finding the surgeon at home.

The outcome was fortunate. Not only was the surgeon at home, but Dorothy took an immediate liking to him and confided to him that she was going to be a doctor. He replied that, although she had really made quite a good job of the amputation herself, he had better give her some chloroform and tidy it up. She felt he had treated her as an equal.

Dorothy Williams went to a girls' public day school, Birkenhead High, which encouraged pupils to be independent and aim at a career, but only in teaching, which was seen, even by her progressive-minded parents, as the only permissible profession. Medicine, which involved co-education in embarrassing subjects in the company of young men, was "unsuitable for a lady".

By 1917, however, when she was due to go to Cambridge, women doctors were justifying their existence on the battlefields and her parents were prepared to compromise. She could go to Cambridge to study science and, after graduating, could choose between teaching and medicine. She chose anatomy and physiology for two of her sciences, regarding the reference to teaching as a face-saver.

Wartime austerities had left their mark on Cambridge and when she arrived at Newnham she found goats grazing on the lawns, tended by the college's biology don. Food was scarce and often unpalatable, and even the vacations were not always holidays. In the summer of 1918 she joined a party of students who went to work on farms in Norfolk, and found herself wearing borrowed breeches, labouring for 12 hours a day, cleaning pig sties, grease-banding fruit trees and sleeping in a rat-infested barn.

With the end of the war the climate of opinion again turned against women doctors, and women students encountered difficulties. Ex-servicemen had to be given priority, and some women felt that they faced resentment. Liverpool's hospitals, however, appear to have been an exception, and Williams considered herself fortunate to be working in an environment where women were never



made to feel unwanted, however crowded the classes. She soon learnt "rag-and-bottle anaesthesia" under the encouraging eye of the surgeon.

As soon as she qualified in 1922 she quickly obtained resident posts in medicine, surgery and gynaecology at the Liverpool Royal Infirmary. This meant long hours; on one occasion, she was called out of bed in the middle of the night to cope with a mad ex-serviceman who, in the manner of a sergeant-major, ordered her to "form fours" and made her march up and down the corridors searching for the enemy until a police van arrived and took him away.

In 1925 she married Samuel Saxon Barton, a surgeon gynaecologist, and decided to specialise in eye surgery, so that she could combine her career with family life. Later she became consultant opthalmic surgeon at St Paul's Eye Hospital, Liverpool, and at Nobles Hospital, Isle of Man.

She retired in 1962 and later moved to Oxford, where she became an expert grower of roses and orchids. Her husband predeceased her, but she is survived by three sons.

PERSONAL COLUMN

ON THIS DAY

January 7, 1950

The Republic of China had been proclaimed on October 1, 1949, by which time the greater part of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces had withdrawn to Formosa (Taiwan).

UK RECOGNIZES COMMUNIST CHINA

From Our Diplomatic Correspondent

The British Government's Note, in the following terms, was delivered at 6 o'clock yesterday morning to Mr. Chou En-lai, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Communist Government, by Mr. W. Graham, the British Consul-General in Peking:-

I have the honour to inform your Excellency that his Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, having completed their study of the situation resulting from the formation of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, and observing that it is now in effective control of by far the greater part of the territory of China, have this day recognized that Government as the *de jure* Government of China. In these circumstances his Majesty's Government, in response to Chairman Mao Tse-tung's proclamation of October 1, 1949, are ready to establish diplomatic relations on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect for territory and sovereignty, and are prepared to exchange diplomatic representatives with the Central People's Government . . .

(Signed) ERNEST BEVIN, his Britannic Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Foreign Office stated last night that Mr. Graham had been instructed to inform Mr. Chou En-lai at the same time that in consequence of their decision the British Governemt had withdrawn recognition from the Nationalist Government. The Chinese Ambassador in London, Dr. Cheng Tien-hsi, has been informed of this decision by Mr. Hector McNeil, Minister of State on Tuedsay evening . . .

The Government of Ceylon, it is learned, has asked the British Government to forward a Note according its recognition to Peking. Pakistan, like India, had already acted in the same sense. Canada, Australia and New Zealand do not propose to do anything until after the Commonwealth conference. Probably Canada will wait for the United States, and there would be no surprise if Australia, whose Minister for External Affairs the other day showed keen interest on closer American-Australian relations, were to be in no hurry either.

The difference on tactics and timing between this country and the United States thus extends into the Commonwealth. However, the American policy outlined two days ago by President Truman and Mr Dean Acheson suggests that the positions are not very far apart, and that the damage from the British recognition being in advance of the American will be mainly in the field of public sentiment.

The United States Government is prevented from recognizing the change in China less by conviction than by the state of American public opinion. The reasons for the British Government's going ahead are fairly simple.

From the practical aspect, it is pointed out, the position is that without recognition there can be no diplomatic relations, and without diplomatic and consular contacts the British Government are quite powerless to do anything to protect our vast commercial interests in China.

NEWS

Family wedding for Prince

■ Prince Edward is determined to have a family wedding rather than a public spectacle when he crowns a five-year courtship by marrying Sophie Rhys-Jones later this year.

The couple, whose engagement was announced by Buckingham Palace, will marry in the late spring or early summer at St George's Chapel, inside Windsor Castle. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were said to be thrilled at the news of their youngest son's impending marriage to the 33-year old public relations executive........Pages 1, 3-5

Intensive care service in crisis

■ Doctors gave a warning that the intensive care service is in crisis, as figures showed that the number of reported flu cases had risen by more than 80 per cent in a week. The waiting list initiative is in danger of being knocked off course ...Pages 1, 9

Boost for Brown

The Prime Minister moved swiftly to bolster Gordon Brown's position and put an end to the simmering feud between the rival camps of the two men which has rocked the government s........Page 2

Monty's view

Viscount Montgomery of Alamein dismissed the African "as a complete savage" who was incapable of developing the continent himself, according to a secret report he prepared after a tour of 12 states........Page 7

Cot death risk

Baby killers are able to go undetected because coroners are too ready to accept that a child has been a victim of cot death, says an infant deaths expert........Page 8

Staying with cars

The Government's plan to shift people out of cars and on to public transport is unlikely to succeed without much greater investment geographers were told.....Page 10

Seeking a dark side

Psychologists have developed a test that companies can use to discover if their managers have a hidden "dark side"........Page 11

Television sex

Television viewers are becoming more tolerant of the portrayal of sex — but believe that it is often a ploy to boost ratings........Page 13

Yemen struggle

Four Scotland Yard detectives were struggling to carry out their investigation into the group behind the kidnapping of 16 tourists in Yemen........Page 14

UN feud

A feud between UN officials and weapons inspectors broke into open warfare when aides to the Secretary-General, accused the United States of misusing intelligence-gathering ....Page 15.

Four-wheel misery

Four-wheel-drive vehicles used mainly as suburban runabouts are having their first real test of strength with Mother Nature and are floundering in snowdrifts by the thousand>........Page 16

Clinton trial chaos

Chaos reigned in Washington as Republicans and Democrats struggled to agree how to avoid a long Clinton trial........Page 17

Help for Mbeki

Tony Blair hopes to boost the image of Thabo Mbeki among whites during his first tour to South Africa this week....Page 18

Defensive Santer

Jacques Santer threw up a defensive wall around his European Commission and vowed to stay in office even if a majority of the European Parliament votes to sack the executive........Page 19

London enjoys January heatwave

London enjoyed its hottest January day for more than 150 years as severe flooding brought chaos to householders and motorists in northern England. As the capital basked in temperatures which climbed to 15.7C (60F) the town of Kendal in Cumbria was almost cut off as torrential overnight rain forced police to shut nine "A" roads........Page 1

BRUNO FABLET



Competitors in the Dakar rally, which ends in ten days, throw up clouds of sand as they negotiate the Mauritanian desert near Atar

Shares surge: The UK stock market closed within striking distance of its all-time high, having been driven up by rampant bank and telecom shares........Page 27

Percy settles: Keith Percy, former chief executive of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, has settled his long-running dispute with a city watchdog over the Peter Young affair........Page 27

Next sales: Shares in clothing retailer Next were back in fashion yesterday after a sparkling Christmas sales update........Page 27

Markets: The FTSE 100 index rose 190.6 points to 6148.8. The pound rose 0.05 cents to $1.6560 but fell 0.42p against the euro to 70.77p. The sterling index fell to 99.2 from 99.7........Page 30

Motor racing: British American Racing, the newest team in Formula One, is taking the sport's rulers to court in a confrontation over the livery of its cars........Page 52

Football: Referees and their assistants are likely to be linked by radio in all Premiership matches next season........Page 52

Cricket: Bob Woolmer, the South Africa coach and a prime candidate to succeed David Lloyd in the same role for England, said he had other plans for his future in international cricket........Page 49

Rugby union: A growing body of opinion in English rugby is beginning to question the wisdom of, and need for, an Anglo-Welsh competition........Page 48

Moving house: Adrian Noble's great RSC production of *The Tempest* transfers from Stratford to London and it is proving to be as bold and as visually arresting as ever it was........Page 36

New films: Michael Caine gives the performance of his life in *Little Voice*, while Gus Van Sant wastes every film buff's time with a remake of Hitchcock's classic thriller *Psycho*........Page 37

Videos and records: *Godzilla* leads the way on video, while Elgar's character portrait of Sir John Falstaff is a choice CD........Page 38

Surrealist show: A new exhibition at the Tate Gallery in Liverpool aims to restore the supreme surreal artist Salvador Dalí back to 20th century fashion........Page 39

Dr Thomas Stuttaford: Migraine and how to deal with it; dyslexia; choking; flu and strokes; and personal stereo players and hearing loss........Page 20

Clinton's marriage: Will hillary stick by her man? Gail Sheehy reveals the childhood that made the First Lady a formidable fighter but left her addicted to an emotionally unavailable man........Page 21

Review: Jeanette Winterson learns from Jorge Luis Borges; a young author disappoints Sarah Dunant; Lisa Jardine debunks a fantasy; Roger Scruton finds himself surprisingly engaged with Ludovic Kennedy's thoughts: Aisling Foster samples three short-story collections........Pages 40 - 42

Best buys: country hotel breaks in England; cruising through the Mediterrane: South Africa for £200 return........Page 44

Europe has given birth to a new currency. Eleven disparate parents congratulated themselves heartily on their offspring, the inelegantly named euro. But each nationhas ceded a huge chunk of sovereignty, with consequences for their economies and democratic institutions

- *The Washington Post*

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

■ **FOCUS**

How will the growth of technology affect the children of the next millennium? A 16-page special supplement on the future of learning

■ **MEDIA**

Does the Mandelson-Whelan clash mark the end of spin-doctoring?

Preview: An Anglo-Saxon grave in Suffolk yields a warrior in full regalia: *Meet the Ancestors* (BBC2, 9pm). **Review:** Joe Joseph finds a remarkable film on theories of time and space........Pages 50, 51

A listing service

The NHS is suffering from a number of debilitating illnesses, the cure for which is not, as Ministers appear to think, simply spending more money........Page 23

Wind of change

Whether South Africa becomes an encouraging example for "Third Way" modernisers worldwide will depend in very large degree on Thabo Mbeki's agenda......Page 23

Natural justice

The case of Keith Percy, a City fund manager, has highlighted qualms over the way in which the financial services are regulated........Page 23

ANATOLE KALETSKY

The single currency has arrived. Wim Duisenberg, the president of the European Central Bank, has achieved with the touch of a computer key something that defied the legions of Caesar and the armies of Napoleon and Hitler........Page 22

MAGNUS LINKLATER

Any Scottish parliament will have free rein to determine who is a "bad landowner" and to take steps accordingly. Whether that will benefit those who live on the land is another matter altogether........Page 22

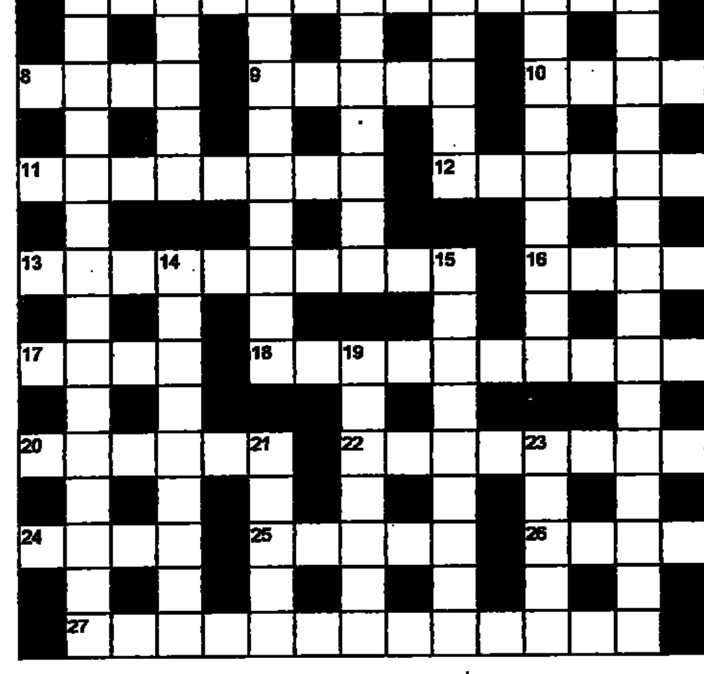
JAMES BROWN

Five years might seem like a long time even for a Prince to go a-courting. But even as Sophie Rhys Jones's friends are screaming "At last, what took him so long?", Prince Edward's mates will be worrying about how quickly he has rushed into this........Page 22

Lieutenant-Colonel Paul Rivière, French Resistance fighter; **Jerry Quarry,** boxer; **Dorothy Barton,** surgeon........Page 25

Flu victims; term-time holidays; "false ideals" of Jimi Hendrix; UK as 51st US state; gene-altered food; hunting on National Trust land; EU set-aside........Page 23

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,994



ACROSS

1 Carpet – what to do if it's too big? (4.3,1.5).
8 Piece of card (4).
9 Twist in pain – not good (5).
10 I left America, returning to this country (4).
11 Fence making a secret collection (8).
12 Replace second character in Macbeth (6).
13 Repairs frames (8,2).
16 Take a risk, rebuffing English policemen (4).
17 Top spy heard but not seen (4).
18 Poorly miner about to get a bit of percussion (10).
20 Can someone lacking energy set about one? (6).
22 Cut off a property right and scoffed (8).
24 Result of court's pronouncement? (4).
25 Look for water and plunge into it (5).
26 Cake slab a bakery stocks (4).
27 Shameful abuse of delicate birds (13).

DOWN

1 Uncommon and economical method of sowing (4,2,3,6).
2 It can bore king after a month (5).
3 To get the better of strike, speak your mind! (3,4,2).
4 Handles moving right up to limits (7).
5 Gambles right in front of one's eyes? (5).
6 Prompt to take a rest (9).
7 This officer is no bellicose captain, briefly maddened (6,9).
14 Considers a particular day of the month to come off the fence (4,5).
15 Careful! Don't become involved with viper (9).
19 Cried – over nothing, end up getting married (7).
21 Bottom of drain damaged (5).
23 Robert, an upwardly mobile, rich and powerful man (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,993

P	O	M	P	O	U	S		T	R	I	U	M	P	H
A		O		U		U		W		M		E		E
C	O	N	S	T	A	B	L	E		P	A	C	K	S
I		A		L		S		A		E		C		I
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Y		T		W		A				C				A
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Times Two Crossword, page 52

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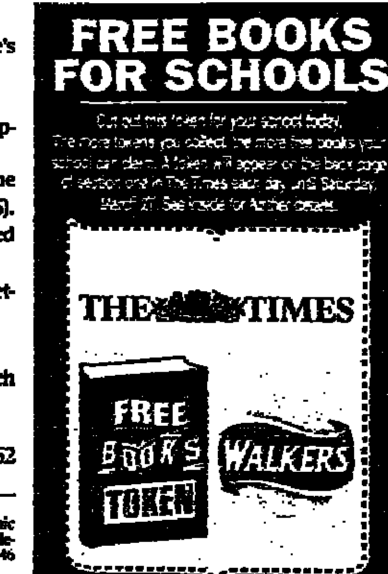
HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 8.05 am | Sun sets: 4.07 pm

Moon sets: 9.30 pm | Moon rises: 10.33 am

Last quarter Jan 9

London 4.07 pm to 8.04 am
Bristol 4.18 pm to 8.14 am
Edinburgh 3.56 pm to 8.41 am
Manchester 4.06 pm to 8.23 am
Penzance 4.36 pm to 8.20 am



☐ **General:** rain in west reaching eastern areas by afternoon, taking over from their dry and bright start. Hill snow in Scotland. Western areas turning brighter and showery in afternoon. Frosty tonight in North.

☐ **London, SE, NE & E England, E Anglia:** early sunny spells, then cloud and rain. Fresh southwesterly wind. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **Central S & Central N England, Midlands, Channel Islands:** early rain, showers later. Fresh southwesterly wind. Max 10C (50F).

☐ **SW & NW England, Wales, Lake District, Isle of Man:** overcast with spells of rain clearing to brighter periods and showers. Fresh westerly wind. Max 10C (50F).

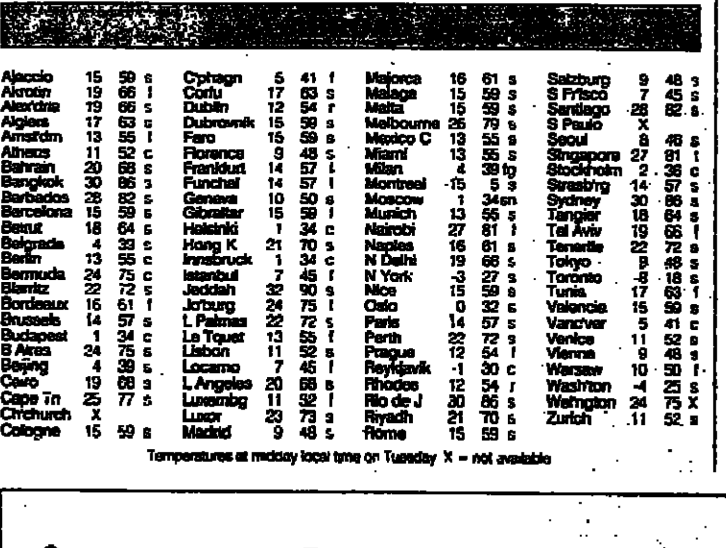
☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, SW & NW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll:** dry, cold start with early sunshine. Rain soon spreading from west. Fresh west to southwesterly wind. Max 6C (43F).

☐ **Central Highlands:** cold, dry start. Rain from west, snow on hills. Fresh west to southwesterly wind. Max 3C (37F).

☐ **Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** cold; early showers, becoming dry and bright. Moderate east to northeasterly wind. Max 5C (41F).

☐ **Northern Ireland, Irish Republic:** rain clearing to sunny spells and showers. Fresh southwesterly wind. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **Outlook:** Friday breezy and showery, Saturday colder with sleet and snow showers in north and east and a frosty night.



24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright, c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gales; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	F			Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	F	
Aberdeen	1.1	0.06	7	45	b	Isle of Wight	X	0.01	13	55	s
Anglesey	-	0.47	8	46	r	Jersey	6.7	0.01	10	50	b
Aspatria	-	0.63	7	45	c	Kinloss	-	0.04	6	43	s
Aviemore	-	0.01	5	41	r	Leeds	-	0.04	9	48	r
Belfast	1.2	0.01	6	43	s	Lerwick	1.5	0.19	5	41	s
Birmingham	-	0.52	12	54	r	Leuchars	3.3	0.42	6	43	b
Bognor R	7.0	-	12	54	s	Littlehampton	6.5	-	12	54	s
Bournemth	4.6	0.01	13	55	s	London	4.8	-	16	61	s
Bristol	2.0	0.04	15	59	r	Lowestoft	1.1	-	13	55	b
Buxton	-	0.78	7	45	r	Manchester	-	0.41	8	46	r
Cardiff	-	0.06	14	57	r	Margate	6.5	0.01	13	55	s
Clacton	6.3	-	9	48	b	Morecambe	-	0.76	8	46	d
Cleethorpes	-	0.14	11	52	r	Newcastle	-	0.01	9	48	c
Colwyn Bay	-	0.23	8	46	c	Newquay	-	0.08	13	55	r
Cromer	3.2	0.01	14	57	b	Norwich	3.3	-	14	57	s
Eastbourne	7.1	0.01	12	54	s	Oxford	2.9	0.01	15	59	r
Eskdalemuir	0.2	0.44	6	43	d	Penzance	X	0.05	14	57	r
Exmouth	0.6	0.05	14	57	r	Poole	2.0	-	14	57	s
Fishguard	-	0.67	7	45	r	Prestatyn	-	0.32	8	46	r
Folkestone	7.0	-	11	52	s	Ross on Wye	-	0.29	9	48	r
Glasgow	0.8	0.14	7	45	s	Saunton Sands	-	0.19	13	55	s
Guernsey	6.0	-	14	57	s	Scarborough	-	0.04	8	46	du
Hastings	7.1	-	12	54	s	Shrewsbury	-	0.51	8	46	r
Hayling I.	5.8	-	11	52	s	Skegness	-	0.07	12	54	r
Herne Bay	6.2	-	14	57	s	Stornoway	-	0.07	6	43	r
Hove	3.5	0.09	11	52	b	Swanage	5.2	0.01	12	54	s
Hunstanton	-	0.03	13	55	r	Teignmouth	1.8	0.04	15	59	sh
Isle of Man	0.2	0.12	8	46	b	Tenby	-	0.43	8	46	r
						Tiree	2.0	0.39	8	46	s

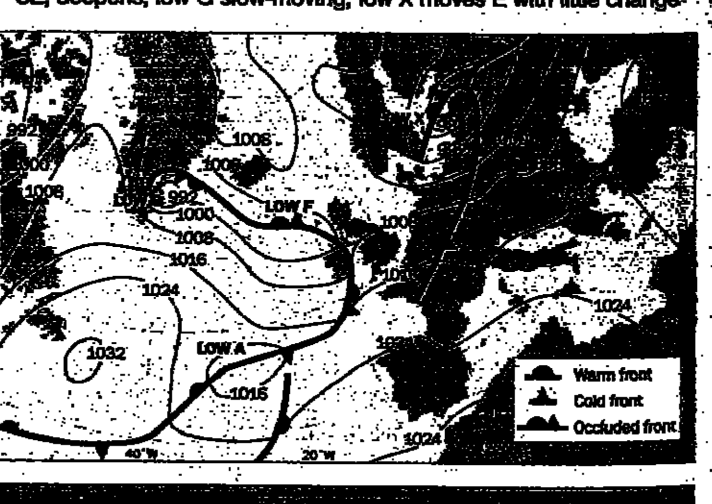
Highest temp: Guernsey 13C (53F); lowest temp: Belfast 1C (34F); highest rainfall: Loch Glascarnoch, 1.15in; highest sunshine: Aberdeen, 3.9hr

Ajaccio	15	59	s	C'phagn	5	41	f	Majorca	16	61	s	Salzburg	9	48	s
Akrotiri	19	66	f	Corfu	17	63	s	Malaga	15	59	s	S Frisco	7	45	s
Alex'dria	19	66	s	Dublin	12	54	r	Malta	15	59	s	Santiago	28	82	s
Algiers	17	63	c	Dubrovnik	15	59	s	Melbourne	26	79	s	S Paulo	X		
Amst'dm	13	55	f	Faro	15	59	s	Mexico C	13	55	s	Seoul	8	46	s
Athens	11	52	c	Florence	9	48	s	Miami	13	55	s	Singapore	27	81	t
Bahrain	20	68	s	Frankfurt	14	57	f	Milan	4	39	fg	Stockholm	2	36	c
Bangkok	30	86	s	Funchal	14	57	f	Montreal	-15	5	s	Strasb'rg	14	57	s
Barbados	28	82	s	Geneva	10	50	s	Moscow	1	34	sn	Sydney	30	86	s
Barcelona	15	59	s	Gibraltar	15	59	f	Munich	13	55	s	Tangier	18	64	s
Beirut	18	64	s	Helsinki	1	34	c	Nairobi	27	81	f	Tel Aviv	19	66	f
Belgrade	4	39	s	Hong K	21	70	s	Naples	16	61	s	Tenerife	22	72	s
Berlin	13	55	c	Innsbruck	1	34	c	N Delhi	19	66	s	Tokyo	9	48	s
Bermuda	24	75	c	Istanbul	7	45	f	N York	-3	27	s	Toronto	-8	18	s
Biarritz	22	72	s	Jeddah	32	90	s	Nice	15	59	s	Tunis	17	63	f
Bordeaux	16	61	f	Jo'burg	24	75	f	Oslo	0	32	s	Valencia	15	59	s
Brussels	14	57	s	L Palmas	22	72	s	Paris	14	57	s	Vanc'ver	5	41	c
Budapest	1	34	c	Le Touquet	13	55	f	Perth	22	72	s	Venice	11	52	s
B Aires	24	75	s	Lisbon	11	52	s	Prague	12	54	f	Vienna	9	48	s
Beijing	4	39	s	Locarno	7	45	f	Reykjavik	-1	30	c	Warsaw	10	50	f
Cairo	19	66	s	L Angeles	20	68	s	Rhodes	12	54	r	Wash'ton	-4	25	s
Cape Tn	25	77	s	Luxembg	11	52	f	Rio de J	30	86	s	Wel'ngton	24	75	X
Ch'church	X			Luxor	23	73	s	Riyadh	21	70	s	Zurich	11	52	s
Cologne	15	59	s	Madrid	9	48	s	Rome	15	59	s				

Temperatures at midday local time on Tuesday X = not available



Changes to chart from noon: low A moves NE, deepens; low F moves SE, deepens; low G slow-moving; low X moves E with little change.



TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT	TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	4:08	4.1	16:12	4.3	Liverpool	1:43	9.1	14:00	9.2
Avonmouth	9:55	12.9	22:20	12.4	London Bridge	4:26	7.2	16:51	7.3
Belfast	1:45	3.2	13:55	3.6	Lowestoft	-	-	12:36	2.3
Cardiff	9:41	12.0	22:06	11.5	Margate	2:32	4.8	15:03	4.7
Devonport	8:30	5.3	20:54	4.9	Milford Haven	8:57	6.7	21:20	6.4
Dover	1:26	6.6	13:46	6.3	Newquay	7:50	6.8	20:14	6.4
Dublin	2:11	4.0	14:27	4.2	Oban	8:09	3.9	20:42	3.6
Falmouth	8:01	5.1	20:25	4.7	Penzance	7:17	5.5	19:39	[illegible]
Greenock	3:18	3.4	18:08	3.8	Portland	9:33	2.1	22:00	[illegible]
Harwich	2:14	3.9	14:39	3.9	Portsmouth	1:50	4.6	13:57	[illegible]
Holyhead	0:54	5.4	13:09	5.6	Shoreham	1:44	6.2	13:49	[illegible]
Hull (Albert D)	9:03	8.3	21:11	8.6	Southampton	1:29	4.5	12:41	[illegible]
Ilfracombe	8:41	9.0	21:04	8.5	Swansea	8:57	11.9	21:20	[illegible]
King's Lynn	9:06	6.2	21:09	6.3	Tees	6:29	9.8	18:39	[illegible]
Leith	5:21	5.4	17:42	5.4	Walton-On-Naze	2:10	4.1	14:36	[illegible]

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY JANUARY 7 1999

One-day jump is biggest for months

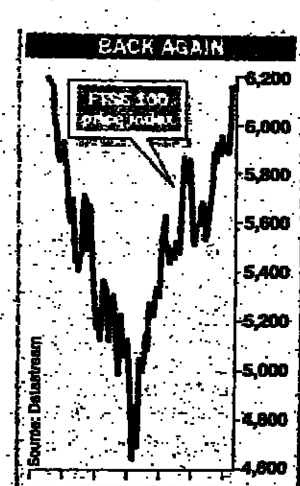
Shares surge to close near record high

By Alasdair Murray and Oliver August

THE London stock market surged close to a record high yesterday as international markets extended their new year rally.

The FTSE 100 index climbed 190.6 points, or 3.2 per cent, to 6,148.8, the highest close since last July. It was the largest one-day climb since October and left the market just shy of the all-time high set on July 20.

Shares advanced despite uncertainty over the outcome of the two-day Monetary Policy Committee meeting which concludes today, with an announcement on interest rates due at midday.



Almost 1.5 billion shares were traded, well ahead of the recent daily average, as investors returned to the market apparently happy that there were no gremlins following the euro conversion weekend. The banking and telecoms sectors again led the market higher as institutional investors rushed to place a wall of excess cash in sectors expected to be the centre of merger activity.

On Wall Street the Dow Jones industrial average moved into record territory, while the main European markets also enjoyed substantial gains to close near their all-time peaks. The Dow soared about 200 points in late trading to clear 9,500 points for the first time. The Nasdaq composite and the Standard & Poor's 500 index also breached records.

The market was buoyed by money flooding in from investors who redirect funds in the new US tax year. Strategists also suggested that uncertainty in emerging markets has sent American investors scurrying back to domestic stocks.

Robert Proehlich, chief strategist at Scudder Kemper Investments, said: "This isn't about earnings. It's about dodging a slowdown in the global economy."

The biggest risers included many technology companies, helped by the retail interest in the Internet. Microsoft saw one of the biggest gains.

European markets also made healthy gains on the third day of euro trading. The Dax index in Frankfurt rose more than 3 per cent to reach its highest level since August, while shares in Paris climbed 2.24 per cent. The pound also made modest gains yesterday despite a weaker than expected service sector survey by the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS). The euro weakened against the pound falling from 71.19p to 70.77p, while on its trade-weighted index sterling closed up 0.5 at 99.2.

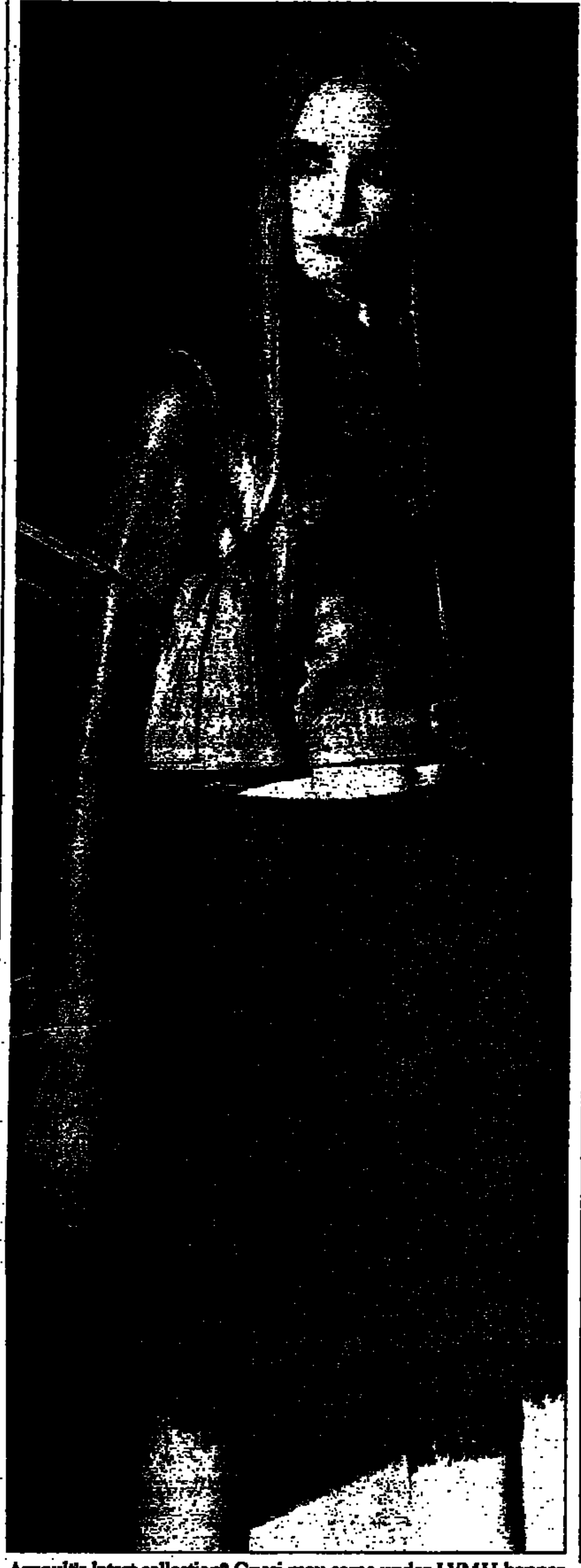
The CIPS business activity index fell pointing to a contraction in the service sector for the second month running. New business orders continued to fall, although at a slightly slower rate than in November, with only the computing and IT sector registering significant growth in business.

The employment index also slipped to 49.8, indicating the first decline since the survey began. Price pressures continued with prices falling at their fastest rate for more than two years. Peter Thomson, director-general of the CIPS, said: "This survey represents a depressing start to 1999 and no doubt exerts further pressure on the MPC to cut interest rates."

However, the City is divided on whether the Bank will act today or pause until it has seen the Christmas season retail figures and the first estimate of fourth-quarter GDP.

Neil Parker, UK economist at Royal Bank of Scotland, said: "With data continuing to indicate a slight reversal in UK economic fortunes, we think the bank will wait for more data before acting."

Commentary, page 29
Stock market, page 30



Arnault's latest collection? Gucci may come under LVMH banner

Reprimand for Percy over Young debacle

By Richard Miles

KEITH PERCY, former chief executive of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, has settled his long dispute with the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation (Imro) by accepting responsibility for a number of regulatory breaches linked to the Peter Young affair.

Imro yesterday said it had reprimanded Mr Percy for his involvement in the £434 million debacle that led to the suspension of three retail investment funds and the court appearance in November of Mr Young, a former star fund manager, on a charge of conspiracy to defraud investors.

It said Mr Percy had admitted failing to ensure that all reasonable steps were taken to avoid irregular management of two European trusts in April to August 1996. Serious irregularities were later found in the funds and trading was suspended for 72 hours.

At the heart of Imro's charges was the unorthodox 33 per cent holding of unlisted securities by the European Growth unit trust. Mr Percy instigated a review of the portfolio, but "should have done more to satisfy himself personally that the advice and progress reports he was receiving from colleagues were correct", Imro said.

Mr Percy, who, with four other directors, was dismissed by Morgan Grenfell in late 1996, has fought for more than two years against Imro's proposed sanctions. He agreed to accept the charges yesterday so he can make a full return to the City as a director of SG Asset Management.

While unwilling to comment on the breaches, Mr Percy said his experience showed that, when it came to compliance matters, chief executives "may not be fully entitled to rely on" their management teams. Only by calling in external legal advisers could a chief executive "be protected from the risk of censure by the regulator", he claimed.

One step removed from the direct compliance of the funds, Mr Percy received a reprimand while his four former colleagues — Glyn Owen, Graham Kane, Michael Wheatley and Paul Ebling — received suspensions ranging from 16 months to three years. Mr Wheatley was also banned for life from holding any position in a compliance department.

These four did not seek to challenge Imro's sanctions at tribunal level because of the prohibitive cost — Morgan Grenfell stopped paying their legal fees after paying out £400,000 per person — but Mr Percy was, until yesterday, determined to go to the tribunal. The likely cost, of more than £1 million, is believed to have deterred him, plus there was no guarantee he would win. His personal costs to date are believed to exceed £100,000.

The reprimand ends Imro's involvement in the Peter Young affair, which saw Morgan Grenfell pay £240 million in compensation to an estimated 180,000 investors and a record £2 million in fines. Its parent company, Deutsche Bank, had to spend £180 million buying up some of the unlisted and unapproved stocks in the funds. These proved to be worth just tens of millions.

Leading article, page 23
Commentary, page 29
System on trial, page 31

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6148.8	(+190.6)
Yield	2.66%	
FTSE All Share	2781.31	(+77.22)
Nikkei	13468.46	(+235.72)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9462.07	(+150.88)*
S&P Composite	1265.20	(+20.42)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	4¾%*	(4¾%)
Long bond	100[illegible]*	(100[illegible])
Yield	5.21%*	(5.21%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	6%	(6[illegible]%)
Liffe long gilt future (Mar)	119.16	(119.25)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6549*	(1.6550)
London:		
$	1.6563	(1.6555)
€	1.4132	(1.4050)
SFr	2.2842	(2.2644)
Yen	186.48	(184.78)
£ Index	99.2	(98.7)

DOLLAR

London:		
€	1.1618*	(1.1775)
SFr	1.3915*	(1.3720)
Yen	112.72*	(111.38)
$ index	103.4	(103.2)

Tokyo close Yen 112.57

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Mar)	$10.90	($10.75)

GOLD

London close	$287.45	($286.65)

*: denotes midday trading prices

Battle plans

The chief executives of eight of the biggest building societies met yesterday to draw up a plan to combat Michael Hardern, the arch-carpetbagger. Page 28

BA warning

Cut-throat competition for premium class passengers is hurting BA, forcing the airline to warn investors that weakness in its forward order book was putting pressure on revenues. The airline revealed yesterday that it suffered a decline in premium traffic in spite of overall growth in passenger volumes. Page 29; Tempus 30

Buoyant sales put Next back in good books

By Sarah Cunningham, Retail Correspondent

NEXT bucked the trend for retail gloom yesterday by producing strong Christmas trading figures that sent its shares jumping 9.5 per cent.

The clothing retailer, which fell from its pedestal last March when it issued a surprise profits warning, was being lauded by analysts again after saying that its high street sales in the five months to Christmas Eve were 13.5 per cent higher on 11 per cent more space. In the eight weeks running up to Christmas, sales were up 17 per cent.

Problems afflicting other clothing retailers were highlighted by the British Retail Consortium's shop price index for December, which showed prices 0.6 per cent lower year-on-year, and which pointed to discounting of clothes before Christmas as one reason for the fall. Many clothing retailers, excluding Next, started their winter sales a week or so early, worried by poor trade.

David Jones, chief executive, said that the improvement in Next's sales came after it had made necessary changes to its buying and merchandising procedures.

The shares, which were at 835p before last March's profits warning, closed at 562½p, up from 513½p. Other retailers, including Marks & Spencer, Liberty and Debenhams, also saw their shares rise.

The only black spot for Next was a 2.5 per cent fall in its Directory sales. This was attributed in part to increased competition in catalogue retailing from the likes of Marks & Spencer and Arcadia.

Tempus, page 30

Electricity firm limits bug staff

By Christine Buckley

LONDON ELECTRICITY will have just 15 additional staff on standby when the clocks strike midnight to herald the new millennium — despite fears of widespread computer failure.

The company, which has two million customers and serves the crucial sites of the Millennium Dome and Trafalgar Square, normally has 30 staff on standby for emergencies.

It claims there is little risk of failure within its business because of minimal use of time-sensitive equipment. As a precautionary measure it will locate standby staff overnight at selected electricity sub-stations.

The company, which covers 250 square miles, had considered giving troubleshooting millennium staff mountain bikes so they could dash through congested streets, but that has been abandoned. Kevin Morton, the company's asset manager, said: "We are sure of the robustness of the network. It is the most reliable in the country."

Arnault looks at £1.9bn bid for Gucci

By Fraser Nelson

BERNARD ARNAULT, chairman of LVMH, is considering a £1.9 billion takeover bid for Gucci, the Italian fashion house. The bid could be funded via the sale of part of LVMH's £2.6 billion stake in Diageo, the British food and drinks company.

Shares of Gucci jumped by 18 per cent in New York yesterday as it emerged that LVMH has built up a 5 per cent stake. M Arnault now has until Friday to say whether his interest in the company is friendly, strategic or hostile.

Analysts believe LVMH wants a 51 per cent stake in Gucci, acquiring Prada's 9.5 per cent stake and the 10 per cent stake held by Investcorp in the process.

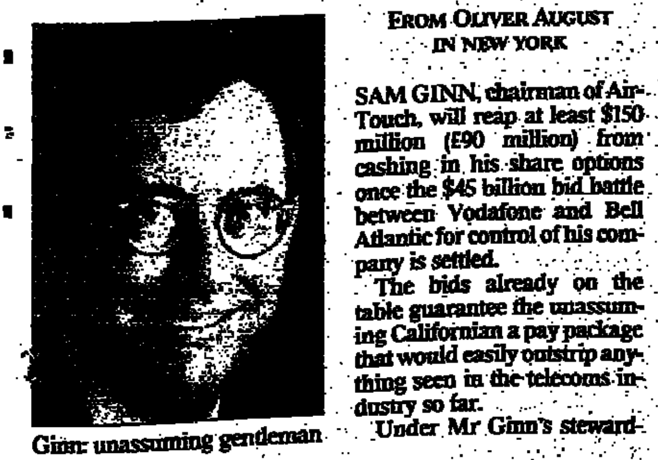
Since Guinness and Grand Metropolitan merged to form Diageo last year, LVMH has picked up £250 million in cash in return for voting the deal through, and a further £270 million in a special dividend. It could sell its £2.6 billion stake at a £500 million profit.

In recent months, M Arnault, who takes pride in LVMH's control of many of the world's most glamorous brands, has consistently expressed his dislike of owning a 10.9 per cent stake in the parent company of Burger King. He left the board two weeks ago.

Shares of Gucci, listed in New York and Amsterdam, have jumped by 75 per cent since bottoming out in September last year. However, it is still 23 per cent off its 1996 peak, when it was valued at £2.75 billion. LVMH, which is quoted in Paris, is capitalised at £14 billion.

Man with the Midas AirTouch

From Oliver August in New York



Ginn: unassuming gentleman

SAM GINN, chairman of AirTouch, will reap at least $150 million (£90 million) from cashing in his share options once the $45 billion bid battle between Vodafone and Bell Atlantic for control of his company is settled.

The bids already on the table guarantee the unassuming Californian a pay package that would easily outstrip anything seen in the telecoms industry so far.

Under Mr Ginn's stewardship, AirTouch shares have more than quadrupled since being floated in 1994. The mobile phone business was spun off from Pacific Telsis.

Mr Ginn, then chairman of Pacific Telesis and initiator of the spin-off, opted to head the fledgeling mobile phone business and was rewarded with a sizeable options package. He has been described as an "unassuming gentleman, almost English".

His 2.4 million options are priced between $20 and $50 with an average price of about $25. Vodafone has offered to pay $90 for each AirTouch share and analysts said the price could go higher.

Mr Ginn, 61, could stay in control of the US operations if Vodafone won the bid battle but is unlikely to postpone retirement for long. Should Bell Atlantic win, Mr Ginn is expected to stand down.

Last year Mr Ginn received a pay package of $2 million. To date the highest-paid telecoms executive is Bernie Ebbers, chief executive of WorldCom MCI. After masterminding the takeover of MCI following a bid battle with BT, Mr Ebbers paid himself an $18 million bonus last year.

It was still not clear yesterday if Bell Atlantic, the US fixed-line and mobile phone group that originally intended to merge with AirTouch, would raise its offer for the company.

Analysts also speculated that British Telecom, Bell South or Mannesmann, the German engineering group with interests in the mobile phone industry, could make a rival offer. However, in the City, Vodafone remained the favourite to clinch the deal.

Northrop warns of 20% fall in profits for 1999

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

NORTHROP Grumman, the US defence company, yesterday gave warning that production cuts meant that 1999 profits will be 20 per cent below forecasts.

The company also announced a $125 million (£76 million) charge for the fourth quarter of last year to cover the increased cost of building 747 fuselages for Boeing.

Northrop said sales for the coming year would be marginally higher than last year at about $9 billion. Previously the company had forecast revenues of $9.3 billion.

The announcement is a new low for Northrop. The company was the focus of a takeover bid last year from Lockheed Martin, which would have created the world's largest defence and aerospace group. However, the merger was blocked by regulators, leaving Northrop hamstrung.

GEC had expressed an interest in buying parts of Northrop but the company has since switched its attention to the ongoing restructuring of the European defence industry.

The main reason for Northrop's slowdown is Boeing's decision to scale back production. The world's biggest aerospace group has been hit by production problems and falling orders in Asia, previously its strongest market.

Boeing has reduced production of its flagship 747 from 3.5 a month to only two. This marks a reversal of the company's original expansion plans for the late 1990s.

Overall, the cutbacks will reduce Northrop's revenue by $350 million rather than the $150 million that the company had forecast in December. Extra costs were also incurred by delayed testing of an infrared countermeasure system for US and UK defence forces.

Societies join forces to fight Hardern's conversion tactics

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

THE chief executives of eight of the biggest building societies met yesterday to draw up a plan to combat Michael Hardern, the arch-carpetbagger.

Mr Hardern, the eccentric former Royal butler, is attempting to force six of the eight societies to float, via a special resolution. He is also putting himself up for election to the societies' boards.

The societies under siege are the Britannia, Portman, Leeds & Holbeck, Chelsea, Skipton and Yorkshire. Mr Hardern put a similar resolution to the Coventry, but the society said earlier this week that both the resolution and his proposal for election to the board had been rejected because they had not received the requisite level of support from the society's membership.

The eighth society represented at the meeting was the UK's second biggest, the Bradford & Bingley, which was forced to close to new savers earlier this week because it is also under attack from a carpetbagger, Stephen Major. Mr Major is hoping to force the Bradford & Bingley to float by submitting a special conversion resolution to be considered at its annual meeting on April 26.

The societies are to seek legal opinion about whether they could use a ruling made 25 years ago, in the case of Hickmott versus the Woolwich Equitable, to block Mr Hardern's resolution. Under the ruling societies can refuse to put a resolution to members if it interferes with the day-to-day running of the business.

Adrian Coles, director-general of the Building Societies Association, said: "The boards of all the societies targeted are fully committed to their mutual status. Following appropriate professional advice each board will discuss the matter further to be certain they are acting consistently with their rules in the interest of their current and future members."

Mr Hardern has in two consecutive years failed to get on to the board of the Nationwide Building Society. Last year, a resolution put forward by Mr Hardern attempting to force the Nationwide to convert was defeated by the narrowest of margins.

Patricia Hewitt, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, yesterday advised building societies not to feel threatened by proposals to convert them into banks and said it was a healthy sign of democracy and competition.

She said the process was part of the "democratic ethos" of building societies which allowed members to have a say on their future.

Last year Ms Hewitt pledged to increase the "turnout threshold" for a vote on conversion from 20 per cent to 50 per cent. "What would be wrong would be to prevent members from trying to come forward at all with a conversion proposal," she told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme.

Oliver Whitehead, chief executive, expects Alfred McAlpine's improved land bank to be reflected in better potential margins

Alfred McAlpine confident

BY ADAM JONES

SHARES in Alfred McAlpine, the housebuilder and construction group, rose yesterday after a confident trading statement.

McAlpine said that its final results for 1998, due to be announced in March, will be in line with expectations. Analysts had been forecasting pretax profits of about £34 million, with earnings per share of about 22p, up from 18.3p last year.

McAlpine said that the operating margin for its homes division in 1998 had exceeded the group's target. The company's trading statement added: "We have ended the year with a higher-quality land bank, both in terms of site locations and potential future margins."

However, Oliver Whitehead, chief executive, said the recent cuts in mortgage rates have not yet led to a full recovery in buyer confidence, which was hit during the second half of 1998 by redundancies and predictions of recession.

He said: "Joe Public has, for six to eight months, been fed a diet of redundancies and bad news. It will take a while to restore confidence." McAlpine expects the UK housing market to remain "steady" in 1999.

The company also said that its construction services division continued to improve in 1998, maintaining a focus on higher-margin projects.

The shares closed up 7½p at 156½p.

LucasVarity price lifted by talks statement

BY PAUL DURMAN

SHARES in LucasVarity yesterday rose to their highest since August as the maker of car components confirmed that it is considering combining its business with a number of other companies.

However, LucasVarity's response to speculation linking it to TRW and Tenneco, its American rivals, was couched in very broad terms, and gave no clue about the nature of any deal that may emerge. The company, recently thwarted by a shareholder vote in its plan to move to the US, is not thought to be near agreeing a merger or joint venture.

Nicholas Jones, a spokesman, said the discussions are preliminary, involving several companies, and embracing "a wide range of strategic alternatives, including joint ventures, acquisitions, dispositions, alliances and mergers or other combinations".

Although the statement let the City conclude little, the shares rose 11¼p to 226½p.

Victor Rice, LucasVarity's chief executive, still believes moving its domicile to the US would bring commercial benefit, but a US merger or reverse takeover would be unpopular with some UK shareholders who would see it as a backdoor way of going to the US.

Microsoft attacks witness over 'inconsistency'

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

AMERICA'S Justice Department has concluded its parade of witnesses in the Microsoft trial with the testimony of a respected economist who helped IBM to beat a similar anti-trust case 20 years ago.

Franklin Fischer, a professor at MIT in Boston, said Microsoft fitted the textbook description of a monopolist and was clearly guilty of using its monopoly power to squeeze competitors out of the market.

Mr Fischer testified that the tactics employed by Bill Gates, the Microsoft chairman, were illegal and regulators should not accept such behaviour in the interest of consumers.

He said: "Microsoft has engaged in anti-competitive conduct that has no compelling economic justification but for its effect of restricting competition. This situation can never make consumers better off than they would be with unfettered competition."

Microsoft responded by attacking him for inconsistency. Mr Fischer was one of the architects of IBM's defence strategy in the first epic anti-trust battle of the computer industry. Then, as now, he worked with David Boies, who is lead counsel for the Justice Department.

In 1983 Mr Fischer published a book called *Folded, Spindled and Mutilated* that summed up the intellectual argument successfully put forward by IBM. He wrote: "Conduct that brings profitable higher sales cannot be anti-competitive, regardless of how uncomfortable it makes competitors."

Microsoft tried to use Mr Fischer's book to discredit him on the witness stand. It said: "Professor Fischer's testimony would give readers of his 1983 book whiplash."

Mr Fischer struck back by calling Microsoft's behaviour towards Netscape, its competitor in the Internet browser market, "predatory". He is a crucial witness because unlike others, he is not employed by a Microsoft competitor or supplier.

Microsoft will present its defence witnesses starting next week.

Booker sheds 200 at division head office

BOOKER, the deeply troubled food business, is shedding 200 managers at the head office of its cash and carry division. Stuart Rose, chief executive of Booker, said that the job cuts will effectively reduce the head count by more than 15 per cent at Booker Belmont Wholesale's headquarters at Wellingborough, Northamptonshire. He said: "It is a necessary cost-cutting exercise." The division as a whole employs more than 10,000 people. Mr Rose said that he could not put a total on the cost of the redundancies.

Mr Rose, who has put Booker's food service and wholesale food businesses on the market, said that talks are poised to carry on into the spring with the heavily indebted group's banks over refinancing. He added: "The banks are fully supportive but we will need new finance. The amount will depend on the business disposals. We are now actively marketing them."

EDS creates 1,000 jobs

EDS, the US information technology group, is to create up to 1,000 jobs in Sheffield at its new services delivery centre. The centre will initially employ 300 IT staff, most of whom are being transferred from the Employment Service, and will start taking on trainees from April. The news comes as Alan Stephens, chief executive of EDS in the UK, is appointed as head of an industry-led task force to promote skills in the IT and communications industry. The group is being backed by the Department of Education and Employment and will form part of the National Skill Task Force and draw on the Department of Trade and Industry's Information Age Partnership.

Albright slows further

ALBRIGHT & WILSON, the specialty chemicals company, yesterday said that it had suffered a further slowdown in activity in its surfactants businesses in the second half and a continuation of aggressive competition in phosphates. The company, which issued its end-of-year trading statement after stock market trading had ended, said that its focus on cash management resulted in curtailed capital investment and a substantial reduction in working capital. Albright shares yesterday ended 1½p down at 63p, their lowest level since the company's 1995 flotation.

Sales record by Jaguar

JAGUAR, the luxury car company, achieved record sales in 1998. For the first time in its 76-year history, the Coventry company sold more than 50,000 vehicles worldwide in a single year. The figures came shortly before an expected announcement that UK new car sales for 1998 reached about 2.23 million — not far short of the annual record set in 1989. Jaguar's record year included UK sales of 11,640 — a 22 per cent increase on 1997. Total Jaguar sales worldwide last year reached 50,220 — a 15 per cent rise on the 1997 figure and 2 per cent more than the previous record set in 1988.

Union tribunal success

UNIONS helped to win £11.5 million compensation for workers at employment tribunals last year. The TUC said that union members were twice as likely to be successful as non-members and usually won higher compensation levels. Unions helped to win cases or achieve a compromise in three out of four claims, a TUC survey found. More unions took cases to employment appeal tribunals last year on legal grounds, showing that they have developed a better understanding of the law, said the TUC.

Wetherspoon cheers

PUB chain JD Wetherspoon raised a cheer after announcing like-for-like sales in the last quarter of last year up by at least 5 per cent. The figures buck the trend in a sector that has been struggling to maintain beer sales. While operators such as Bass and Whitbread have scaled back expansion programmes, Wetherspoon is to spend £100 million opening 80 pubs this year — 10 per cent more than it previously forecast. Wetherspoon has created a traditional atmosphere at all of its 306 managed pubs, where it bans music and television.

Greenspan meeting

ALAN GREENSPAN, Chairman of the US Federal Reserve, is to attend a meeting of central bankers in Hong Kong early next week. Representatives from Asian and some other central banks are due to meet in Hong Kong on Sunday and Monday under the auspices of the Swiss-based Bank for International Settlements. The agenda will include a review of the global economy and bank restructuring. Hong Kong, which was a British colony for 156 years, reverted to Chinese rule in 1997 and was soon hit by Asia's financial turmoil.

GEC shares surge

GEC shares surged yesterday in anticipation of a big defence merger with British Aerospace or an alliance with a US or French partner. The stock closed up 17½p at 573p, close to its record of 580p. Its Marconi Communications subsidiary also announced that it has won a $47 million (£28.3 million) contract from Boeing to modernise the Airborne Warning and Control System (Awacs) aircraft operated by Nato. The contract is for the development of an "interrogator" that identifies friends or foes in the air. Installation is expected to start in December.

Small factory risks

WORKERS in small factories have a relatively high risk of serious and fatal injuries. A Health and Safety Executive study found that rates of injuries that lead to death or amputation occurring in small factories — those with fewer than 50 workers — are double those in large workplaces, with 200 or more workers. Major injuries, requiring medical treatment, are about 25 per cent more frequent in small workplaces. However, the HSE said the rate of minor injuries, mainly leading to four or more days' absence, is lowest in small workplaces.

Law Society to rule on indemnity cover monopoly

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

LARGE City and national legal firms will learn within weeks whether they have succeeded in breaking the Law Society's monopoly in supplying professional indemnity (PI) insurance to the industry.

Their campaign will come to a head when the 75 members of the full council of the Law Society meet on January 21.

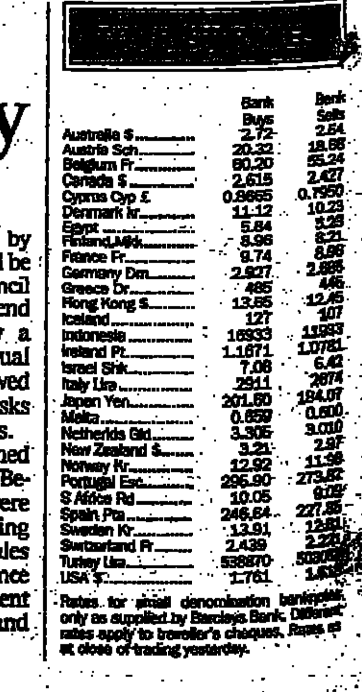
The firms have obtained a legal opinion on the issue from the Honourable Michael Beloff, QC, which they believe has strengthened their case considerably. Mr Beloff said yesterday he believed the Law Society's monopoly restricted and distorted competition under European law.

The legal firms argue that they should be allowed to buy PI insurance in the free market. Fees for compulsory cover rose sharply last year.

Dissidents, known as the November Meeting Group (NMG), claim they are being charged more in order to make up a shortfall in the Law Society's mutual insurance fund. This fund, known as the Solicitors' Indemnity Fund (SIF) has a deficit of £432 million.

The Law Society has commissioned its own report by Aon, the insurer, which will be made public at the council meeting. Aon will recommend that insurance firms pay a levy to underpin the mutual fund, and that SIF be allowed to continue to underwrite risks alongside commercial firms.

In the statement published yesterday by the NMG, Mr Beloff advised that there were "strong grounds" for arguing that the Law Society's rules stopped European insurance companies offering equivalent cover to solicitors in England and Wales.



	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.72	2.54
Austria Sch	20.32	18.68
Belgium Fr	60.20	55.24
Canada $	2.615	2.427
Cyprus Cyp £	0.8655	0.7950
Denmark Kr	11.12	10.23
Egypt	5.84	5.25
Finland Mk	8.96	8.21
France Fr	9.74	8.98
Germany Dm	2.927	2.688
Greece Dr	485	445
Hong Kong $	13.55	12.45
Iceland	127	107
Indonesia	16933	13993
Ireland Pt	1.1671	1.0781
Israel Shk	7.08	6.42
Italy Lira	2911	2674
Japan Yen	201.60	184.07
Malta	0.659	0.600
Netherlds Gld	3.305	3.010
New Zealand $	3.21	2.97
Norway Kr	12.92	11.98
Portugal Esc	295.90	273.82
S Africa Rd	10.05	9.09
Spain Pta	246.64	227.85
Sweden Kr	13.91	12.81
Switzerland Fr	2.439	[illegible]
Turkey Lira	538870	[illegible]
USA $	1.761	[illegible]

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Old Lady struggles to keep up

COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

New year, same old market. How can the members of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee concentrate on warding off the threat of a deep recession when stock market investors are busy pushing the FTSE 100 within touching distance of its all-time high? The international financial crisis last autumn now seems a distant bad memory; the accelerating downturn in the domestic economy a figment of bearish imaginations.

Institutional investors who shied away from shares during the run-up to euro trading are now desperate for exposure to what is becoming another record-breaking rally. Never mind the fundamentals, they do not want to miss the fun. Rarely has the distance between the stock market and the Old Lady seemed so far.

The Bank has boarded a rate-cutting cycle that the market believes will soon take rates down to levels not seen since the 1960s. Inflation control remains the official target but it is clear that the MPC has more than half an eye on vanishing growth prospects. As the Chartered Institute of Purchasing Surveyors' December service sector report revealed yesterday, growth has even disappeared from the previously robust service sector, which now appears well on the way to its own technical recession. The tight labour market conditions that worried the Bank for much of last year have been replaced by job losses.

Only the consumer apparently stands between the Bank and another half-point rate cut today. Expenditure on items such as mobile phones has stormed ahead — an important sectoral factor behind the FTSE's sharp rise yesterday. Even the performance in the high street, though poor, may prove to have been not as dire as some gloom-merchants had predicted. Next, the clothing group, turned in a robust trading statement yesterday, albeit from a low base. Retailers moaning about their pre-Christmas sales have become as permanent a fixture of the season as mince pies and mistletoe. It happened last year, when the economy was moving ahead with full steam. Only retailers and advertisers inhabit a world where everyone does their Christmas shopping in November. Consumers were careful but they did spend. As ever, the rush came late, and it was far from evenly spread. Panic discounting ensured that many stores saw margins evaporate in far from festive mode.

The City believes that the mixed consumer evidence may persuade the Bank not to take action again today, or at best reduce rates by a quarter point. Yet consumer spending tends to lag the rest of the economy with workers still banking last year's decent pay rise and not yet feeling the full impact from rising unemployment. The evidence from the rest of the economy is that the Bank is barely managing to keep up with the downward spiral. The stock market, in contrast, appears determined to ignore it.

Wolfson goes in for panel-beating

Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale is a leading member of Business for Sterling, an organisation that wishes to protect a venerable British institution, namely the pound, from being rendered extinct by the onward march of Europe. Yet in his attack on the Takeover Panel, the GUS chairman appears ready to mortally damage another venerable British institution which has its own problems resisting the deathly embrace of Europe.

And why? To prove that he was not merely overgenerous in paying £1.9 billion for Argos, but that he was duped by a combination of Schroders and Stuart Rose, who is now battling to save another British institution, Booker. The famous one-eyed Albanian could have told GUS that Argos's Dutch business was virtually worthless but, apparently, GUS and its advisers chose to base their valuation on the rather more optimistic views of Argos and its advisers.

Wolfson argues that the panel was wrong not to uphold the original complaint that GUS made against Argos and Schroders. He appealed to the executive of the panel, a 15-strong body headed by Alistair Defriez, the director-general, who is on secondment from Warburg Dillon Read, and 11 other members on secondment from City firms. The executive threw out the appeal. However, Wolfson was not satisfied, and appealed to the full Takeover Panel on the basis that Mr Defriez was in a similar position to Lord Hoffman in deciding the fate of General Pinochet, since Warburg Dillon Read was Argos's broker. The panel has accepted this appeal out of a sense of fair play. Whether or not it now grants Lord Wolfson the public rebuke of his opponents that he seeks, it has entered dangerous territory.

First, if Defriez could be said to have had one conflict of interest, he actually had two. Warburg is also GUS's financial adviser, but stood aside on the Argos bid because of its relationship with the target company.

Secondly, and more importantly, this challenge assumes that a professional on secondment to a self-regulatory organisation cannot be trusted to act independently. This destroys the principle on which the panel has worked for 30 years, a principle that has saved the London market from statutory regulation and vexatious litigation.

Defriez and co seemed close to persuading Brussels that the panel is an efficient and effective mechanism. Now Lord Wolfson is questioning its very essence.

Danger for funds in Percy precedent

Keith Percy's reprimand from Imro may superficially look like a swipe from a wet lettuce leaf, given that he is now back in business with former colleague Nicola Horlick at SG Asset Management. But the long, drawn-out Imro proceedings, costly in emotional as well as financial terms, amount to a high price to be exerted from someone whom Imro accepts was not guilty of dishonesty or lack of integrity.

Mr Percy may be drawing an extreme scenario when he says that Imro's ruling indicates that no chief executive will be safe without his own legal advisers to hand at every stage but, if relying on the advice of his own compliance department is not sufficient to avoid censure, then the risk is that chief executives will be pushed towards taking outside advice. Such second guessing is not only expensive but damaging to trust within an organisation.

The goings on at Morgan Grenfell Asset Management were extraordinary. Those who failed to prevent Peter Young's antics may have deserved to lose their jobs. Yet those taking responsible positions in the City may think more than twice before laying themselves open to the costs of the legal battles that Mr Percy and his colleagues faced. In the professions, people usually enjoy the benefits of professional indemnity insurance. On the Percy precedent, fund managers may soon come under pressure to offer similar comfort to their top people.

Victor's gambit

VICTOR RICE failed to persuade shareholders of LucasVarity that he should be allowed to move the company's base to the United States, conveniently close to his home. But he is a man of immense determination, not to be outdone by a bare majority of investors. He now admits that he is intent on exploring deals that will enhance the future for the company, whether by joint venture, merger or acquisition. The chances that these explorations might stretch into euroland, instead of the US, seem slight.


Taking flight: BA revenue has suffered because of fewer premium class passengers, lured by competitive rival airlines

BA feels the pressure as competition bites

By Carl Mortished, International Business Editor

CUT-THROAT competition for first class and business passengers is hurting British Airways, and forced the airline to warn investors yesterday that weakness in its forward order book was putting pressure on revenues.

The airline suffered a decline in premium traffic in spite of overall growth in passenger volumes. The company said it was too early to comment on 1999 bookings but took the unusual step of warning: "Forward bookings point to a continuing softness in the market, particularly in premium traffic. This is putting heavy pressure on yields."

Traffic figures for December show that BA is getting its share of overall air traffic growth with a 10.5 per cent rise in revenue passenger kilometres. However it carried almost 4 per cent fewer first and club class passengers.

Air transport analysts reckon that the industry earns as much as 30 per cent of its income from 5 per cent of passengers, those at the front end of the aircraft.

BA yesterday added to investor misery by revealing that profits for the third quarter to December would be hit by the strength of the yen. The company has Y127 billion (£688 million) in uncovered Japanese debt to finance aircraft leases. Leasing in Japan carries tax and low interest advantages but an 18 per cent fall in sterling against the yen will increase the interest charge on the loans. While current cashflow is unaffected, BA is forced to take a £117 million charge to its third-quarter profits.

Analysts were bemused yesterday by the sight of BA shares drifting upwards with the market.

BA has enlisted its entire workforce in an attempt to claw back premium class passengers lured to rival airlines. Even cabin crew have been corralled into battle and asked to call on small firms and deliver the BA sales pitch.

A spokesman for the company said that BA had reshaped its aircraft order book, cancelling 747s and replacing them with 777s in line with the new strategy. The latter aircraft will have a smaller proportion of economy seats.

BA confirmed yesterday that it was in talks with JAL which could lead to the Japanese airline joining BA's One-World Alliance. A spokesman said that no decision had been made but links in the form of code-sharing and frequent-flyer programmes could be on the agenda.

BA already has a link with ANA, JAL's rival, which manages BA's frequent-flyer programme for Japanese customers. However, ANA has announced plans to join the rival Star Alliance with Lufthansa. The move by ANA has forced BA to seek a different partner. The British airline has been keen to find a partner in Japan which accounts for the bulk of air traffic in East Asia.

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BP moves advertising account

BP has moved its advertising account, which is worth more than £10 million a year, from Saatchi & Saatchi to its arch-rival M&C Saatchi in the wake of its merger with Amoco (Jason Nissé writes).

Ads proclaiming the creation of BP Amoco, with the slogan "I Do", will appear today in newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Saatchi & Saatchi has been in charge of BP's worldwide advertising for more than a decade, promoting the oil giant as a caring organisation that helped people in far flung parts of the world.

The move will be embarrassing for Saatchi & Saatchi, which has lost the British Airways, Mirror Group and Dixons accounts to M&C since the Saatchi brothers left to form a new agency five years ago.

Wolfson wins right to challenge panel

By Fraser Nelson


Wolfson: Pinochet Principle

LORD WOLFSON, chairman of Great Universal Stores, has won an appeal to challenge the structure of the Takeover Panel in a final attempt to prove he was misled during his company's £1.9 billion bid for Argos (See Commentary, this page).

His case centres on accusations that Alistair Defriez, director-general of the Takeover Panel, should not have handled an initial appeal by GUS because he is on secondment from Warburg Dillon Read, which acted as adviser to Argos.

If the latest appeal is successful, it would rewrite the 30-year-old structure of the Takeover Panel, which is staffed by directors on secondment from the City.

Lord Wolfson, whose case has already been rejected by the Takeover Panel twice, is invoking what his advisers describe as the "Pinochet Principle" because of the conflict of interest. GUS said: "This is the fundamental right against bias — exactly the same principle as the Pinochet case. The panel have rejected us twice, and their director-general will be going back to work for Argos's adviser."

Mr Defriez said: "The idea that Takeover Panel members sit and argue cases from the viewpoints of their financial institutions is, in my opinion, a load of nonsense but that's by-the-by.

"GUS has appealed, and we will hear it because we uphold fairness and fair play."

Lord Wolfson particularly takes issue with a footnote on Argos's main defence document of April 3 saying: "Five stores were opened in Holland and initial sales are above expectations."

GUS says it has documents which prove that, on March 28, Argos knew that the stores were trading 11 per cent behind expectations. It also claims Argos gave a misleading Easter trading statement. The former advisers to Argos reject all these claims.

Sir David Calcutt, chairman of the panel, will consider Lord Wolfson's claims with nine other executives.

Alchemy blames Allied Carpets as talks collapse

By Sarah Cunningham

ALLIED CARPETS' takeover talks ended in acrimony yesterday as Alchemy, the venture capitalist that had been interested in buying the carpet retailer, alleged that it had not been given enough information by Allied's management to allow it to make a formal bid.

Allied, which was first approached by Alchemy in mid-September, said that "after extensive reviews of the business and despite full co-operation from the management", no formal bids had emerged.

Jon Moulton, Alchemy's managing partner, said that this was "a fairly vigorous overstatement", and complained that Allied had made talks go "at a snail's pace". Mr Moulton said: "We never made an offer because we'd always want to know the solidity of its financial position first."

Allied countered that it had given Alchemy all necessary financial details, and complained that Alchemy had now breached its confidentiality agreement.

Allied, which parted company with its finance director and its head of retail operations last year after accounting irregularities were uncovered, said that it had been in talks with more than one possible buyer. The sale of its Carpetland stores to Carpetright, its main rival, for £12 million is to be completed on Monday.

Allied shares yesterday slumped 7p to 41p, near to their low. They were trading at 320p two years ago.

Julian Lee, Allied's chairman, said that it wanted to focus on improving its sales and cutting its overhead costs.

Allied Textiles directors opt to sacrifice pay rise

By Fraser Nelson

THE nine directors of Allied Textiles are to forego a pay rise after presiding over its sharpest revenue decline since 1980.

John Corrin, who gave up an attempt to take the Yorkshire clothmaker private last year, said the entire board has refused a pay rise averaging 5 per cent.

The decision came as Allied confirmed that its turnover dropped by 11 per cent over the year to £207 million after a disastrous performance from its woollen textiles.

However, Mr Corrin will receive £253,000 from the generous 52 per cent increase in dividend that the company decided to pay from the £4.8 million profit on property disposals.

Mr Corrin and three other directors own 7.25 per cent of the shares and will collect £660,000 between them. Last year, the dividend brought them £434,000 each.

Martin Towers, who has now replaced Gerald Wightman as finance director, said: "We don't see the pay cuts as a big deal. This is not a fat-cat company; we know how difficult trading conditions are and we simply don't think we could justify a pay rise in these conditions."

The City was relieved there were no further shocks in the results, and the shares added 4p to 115p.

After the property disposal sales, pre-tax profits were £16.5 million (£16.3 million) and earnings were 18.7p (16.6p) a share. The dividend is 12.85p (9.1p) with a final 10p due on April 6.

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Telewest investor fulfils City's dream criteria

BUYING at the bottom and selling at the top is the ultimate ambition for every City investor. So, full marks to the institution that decided to cash in its chips by selling a near 12 per cent stake in high-flying **Telewest** in a deal worth £444 million.

Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, acquired 253.76 million shares at a heavily discounted 175¼p as part of a bought deal when the ruling price was steady at the 205p level. They were later sold on to various institutions.

At the last count Cox Communications held 12 per cent of Telewest and was known to be a seller. Tele-Communications, currently being bid for by AT&T Corporation, holds a further 21.6 per cent.

Telewest has soared from a low of 64p during the past year and gained status as a constituent of the top 100 companies. This was all achieved without the company making a penny profit, such has been the strength of the sector.

Elsewhere in the sector, **Colt Telecom** climbed 87½p to £11.24½ on reports that NTL in the US wanted to bid. **Vodafone** retreated 21½p to £10.89 as investors pondered the proposed £60 billion merger with AirTouch Communications, while **Cable & Wireless** celebrated strong growth among its mobile phone customers with a jump of 69p to 848p. **Orange** continued to build on its growing customer base with a rise of 80½p to 908½p.

Glancing into a crystal ball, traders in the futures pit have concluded that share prices generally will hit a record high this morning. The FTSE 100 index March future closed at 6,200. That compares with the previous best of 6,179.0 achieved on July 20, last year.

The cash market came close to it in hectic trading yesterday as London followed the lead of Wall Street and markets in the Far East and Europe.

The index closed near its best of the day with a leap of 190.6 to 6,148.8. Hopes of fresh corporate activity combined with buying of many of the old favourites to squeeze prices higher in a marketplace short of stock.

Some of the ratings among leading shares now look plain daft, but with hopes still high that interest rates will be cut again today, investors threw caution to the wind. Total turnover of 1.47 billion was bolstered by the Telewest placing.



Peter George, left, chief executive, and Brian Wallace, finance director of Ladbroke, which added 16¼p to 248¼p

One of the few dull spots was **Lasmo**, down 8p to a five-year low of 92p. Brokers say it reflects the deteriorating oil price, but the speculators maintain that Lasmo is looking vulnerable to a bid.

Albright & Wilson, 1½p easier at 63p, is also likely to come under the hammer this morning after issuing a gloomy trading statement after the official close of business last night.

Ladbroke has plenty of admirers, with the price advancing 16¼p to 248¼p. Dresdner Kleinwort Benson has included it as one of its top five European naps for 1999. Credit Suisse First Boston has also been pushing the shares as one of its selections for 1999.

Recent support for **Energis**, down 17½p to £15.35, has also been good news for **National Grid**, its parent, 20¼p better at 510p. HSBC Securities, the broker, has reiterated its "buy" stance for shares of the latter.

Norwich Union rose 26p to 450p as BT Alex Brown, the broker, moved from "market perform" to "buy".

News of a bid approach lifted **Avonside** 10p to 50p. City speculators claim housebuilder **Bryant**, up 4½p to 88p, is the most likely suitor.

Share buying by one director was responsible for a rise of 9p to 211½p in **Oxford Instruments**. Sir Martin Wood, deputy chairman, has bought 125,000 shares at 204p. It takes his total holding to 2.67 million, or 5.6 per cent.

Dentmaster held steady at 5¼p despite Steve Laugharne, managing director, unloading a parcel of 500,000 shares at the 4½p level. It reduces his holding in the company to 94,708, or less than 1 per cent.

David Abell has been picking up more shares in **Jourdan**, steady at 44½p, where he is chairman. He has bought a total of 75,000 shares at prices between 42p and 44p. It takes his holding to 5.17 million shares, or 15.73 per cent.

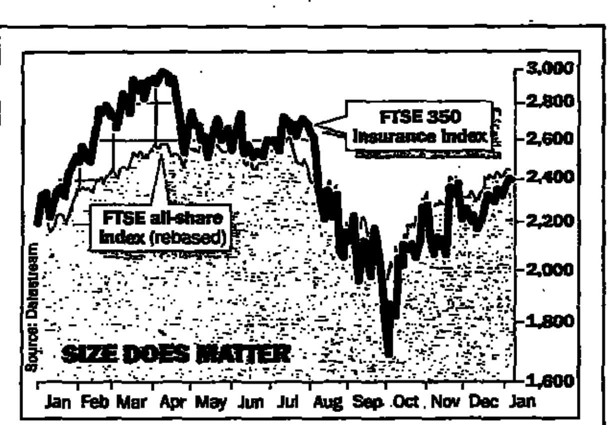
Tadpole Technology stood out with a rise of 1¾p to 10p ahead of final results due out soon. Brokers say the results will be accompanied by news that the group has signed up more big customers for its Java software system.

Profit taking left **United Carriers** 12p down at 29½p. The shares were chased higher recently by the news that former stockbroker and pizzaman Luke Johnson had built up a 7 per cent stake.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** Bond prices closed mixed after trading in narrow limits. Prices among longer-dated issues suffered falls stretching to more than 50p, while shorts closed with small gains on the day.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt finished down 9p at £119.16 on turnover of 19 million contracts. In longs, Treasury 7 per cent 2002 firmed 4p to £107.53, while Treasury 8 per cent 2021 shed 53p at £151.08.

☐ **NEW YORK:** US shares moved to record highs as investors piled into blue chips. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up 150.88 points to 9,462.07.



LEHMAN BROTHERS, the US securities house, is optimistic about the outlook for the insurance sector in 1999 and is urging clients to "think big".

Michael Lindsay, at Lehman, has upgraded recommendations for eight companies and reduced on a further two.

Top of his shopping list among the British companies is Allied Zurich, up 36p to 998½p, and Royal & SunAlliance, 31½p dearer at 548½p. BT Alex Brown also rates RSA a "buy".

The Allied Zurich management is looking for long-term earnings growth of 15 per cent. Mr Lindsay says this appears realistic given the business mix.

RSA is seen as undervalued after a disastrous 1998. But the group needs to achieve a better return on equity.

CGU, 50½p better at 979½p, has been lifted from "neutral" to "outperform" with Lehman claiming the management is capable of restoring non-life profitability.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):

Dow Jones	9462.07 (+150.88)
S&P Composite	1265.20 (+20.42)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average	13468.46 (+235.72)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng	10233.80 (+342.74)

Amsterdam:

AEX Index	583.66 (+17.15)

Sydney:

AO	2853.4 (+37.6)

Frankfurt:

DAX	5443.62 (+189.71)

Singapore:

Straits	1464.97 (+78.73)

Brussels:

BEL20	3581.92 (+2.22)

Paris:

CAC-40	4294.82 (+94.04)

Zurich:

SKA Gen	1447.90 (+28.20)

London:

FT 30	3669.8 (+114.2)
FTSE 100	6148.8 (+190.6)
FTSE 250	4944.4 (+74.2)
FTSE 350	2886.6 (+82.7)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2924.12 (+65.58)
FTSE All-Share	2781.31 (+77.22)
FTSE Non Financials	2830.56 (+58.38)
FTSE Fixed Interest	157.56 (-0.17)
FTSE Govt Secs	116.15 (-0.10)
Bargains	89372
SEAQ Volume	1476.0m
US$	1.6580 (+0.0005)
Euro	0.7077 (-0.0042)
Exchange Index	99.2 (+0.5)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£:SDR	1.1888
RPI	164.4 Nov (3.0%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	162.0 Nov (2.5%) Jan 1987=100

AIM VCT	100	...
Abbey Natl Dublin Inv	91½	...
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Cap	89½	+ 5
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Inc	119	+ 1½
Charlol	117½	...
Collective Assets Trust	117	...
Financial Objects	265	...
First Active	350½	+ 11
Five Arr Uts Cv Ln 2040	119	...
Marley 8	11	...
Natl Bldg Mtls Cv Pf	105	...
Natural Building Mtls	5	...
Piccadilly Growth Ts	97	...
REXAM B (100)	96	...
Slager & Frd AIM VCT	100	...
Willington	77½	...
Xenova Warrants	13½	...
Yeoman 9 Equity Units	96½	...
Yeoman II Inv Tst Cap	7¼	...
Yeoman II Inv Tst Inc	89	...
Yeoman II Zero Div Pf	107	...

EMAP n/p (875)	199	+ 5
Recognition Systems n/p (9)	4¼	+ 2
SKD Media n/p (15)	1¼	...

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
BWI	69½	+ 22	+ 46.3
Euro Telecom	161½	+ 34	+ 26.6
Avonside	50	+ 10	+ 25.0
Jardine Math	187¼	+ 29½	+ 18.7
Liberty	132½	+ 20	+ 17.7
Walker Greenbk	64	+ 9½	+ 17.4
Fyffes	145	+ 20	+ 16.0
ALSTOM	1562½	+212½	+ 15.7
Benchmark	151½	+ 20	+ 15.2
Wyko	92½	+ 12	+ 14.9
Stand Chart	784	+ 94	+ 13.6
Reed Executive	83	+ 9½	+ 12.9
Sema Gp	664	+ 75	+ 12.7
HK Land	81	+ 9	+ 12.5
APL	387½	+ 42½	+ 12.3
Jardine Strat	105	+ 10¾	+ 11.4
Capital Inds	55	+ 5½	+ 11.1

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Utd Carriers	29½	− 12	− 28.9
Allied Carpets	41	− 7	− 14.5
Card Clear	37	− 4½	− 10.8
IOC Intl	40	− 4½	− 10.1
LASMO	92	− 8	− 8.0
Abbot Group	180	− 12½	− 6.4

Next in line to improve

A PROFITS warning by Next last March left its legion of fans disappointed. In a matter of hours it went from being a stock market star to a pariah. A lot of work has evidently been done in Leicester over the past few months and its performance over Christmas, in frankly difficult circumstances, did a tremendous amount to restore its reputation.

In the 21 weeks to Christmas Eve, the best performing part of the group was the high street business, which saw sales rise 13.5 per cent on 11 per cent more retail space. Crucially, it was one of the very few not to start offering discounts until the official beginning of its winter sale after Christmas. In addition, it started the sale with a lot less stock than at the same time last year, which will be of great benefit to its margins.

Sales from the autumn/winter directory were, by contrast, a disappointment, with a 2.5 per drop. Some positive signs from the spring/summer catalogue, which has just been sent out, would be comforting.

Just how well Next did will only become clear when other clothing retailers publish their own Christmas trading statements. Most are due out in the next couple of weeks, but all the signs are that Next will come out as one of the best performers and that many other clothing retailers have had a horrible time.

High fixed costs are not the same concern at Next as they are at Arcadia, while Marks & Spencer, its other big rival, should be the safest of havens but has its own particular trading problems, which are expected to have hit Christmas trade badly. Even after its share price rise yesterday, Next is on a discount to the market and is worth a buy.

British Airways

NOTHING is going right for BA at the moment. The airline industry has finally realised that it matters not a bean if you have the biggest market share when your market consists of backpackers, package tours and economic migrants.

BA is waging war to protect its first and club class passengers and is being forced to offer discounts to keep the custom of large multinationals. However, there is less business about. For example, BP Amoco has recently cut its travel budget, forcing the jet-setting oilmen to do business back at base using phones, e-mail and videoconferencing instead of in the first class lounge. Other firms are doing likewise.

BA no doubt hopes this is a temporary blip and normal corporate extravagance will resume. But if firms discover that business can be done without jet lag and an expensive night in a hotel, they may be slow to resume flying.

Nonetheless, traffic in Asia is beginning to lift from its nadir and BA needs a Japanese partner. The ideal candidate, ANA, has apparently plumped for the rival grouping, Star, a curious decision given ANA's existing link with BA over the latter's Air Miles programme. ANA is the bigger player on Japan's domestic routes and BA would have benefited from feeding ANA's passengers from across Japan on to BA flights. However, that prize appears to have gone to Lufthansa, and BA will now have to build a new relationship with JAL. The shares are best left alone.

BA'S CLASSLESS SOCIETY

FTSE all-share index (rebased) — British Airways share price. Scale 300–750p, Jan to Jan. Source: Datastream

Allied Textiles

ALLIED TEXTILES seems to have done its shareholders a favour by deciding against taking itself private early last year.

No one in West Yorkshire, or anywhere else in Britain, has had fun spinning any form of yarn in the past 12 months, but Allied seems to have be weathering the turgid market conditions with its balance sheet intact.

Astonishingly, it has done best selling carpets at a time when UK carpet retailers are battling against the worst conditions in memory.

It has done this by selling to Germany and Belgium, which now account for 15 per cent of its profits.

Only woollen fibres have suffered the kind of profits collapse the City feared. Synthetic fibres declined by 6.6 per cent.

Add to this further scope for property disposals and shareholders can, at the very least, expect some more generous dividends which have compensated many board members for the noble decision to forego a pay rise.

With £5.6 million of cash, up from £1.7 million last time, Allied Textiles is not the bombed-out textile manufacturer that its share price of 7.8 times forecast earnings suggests. The shares are now worth a punt.

Alfred McAlpine

ALFRED McALPINE has suffered from being too closely identified with the craft of road building, whose decline in the UK has been one of the factors in the poor performance of the shares, which stood as high as 320p in 1994 but closed yesterday at 156½p.

Yesterday's confident trading statement was a reminder to the City that, while construction margins are wafer thin, its housing business is still in robust shape, even though mortgage rate cuts have still not had much of an effect on confidence.

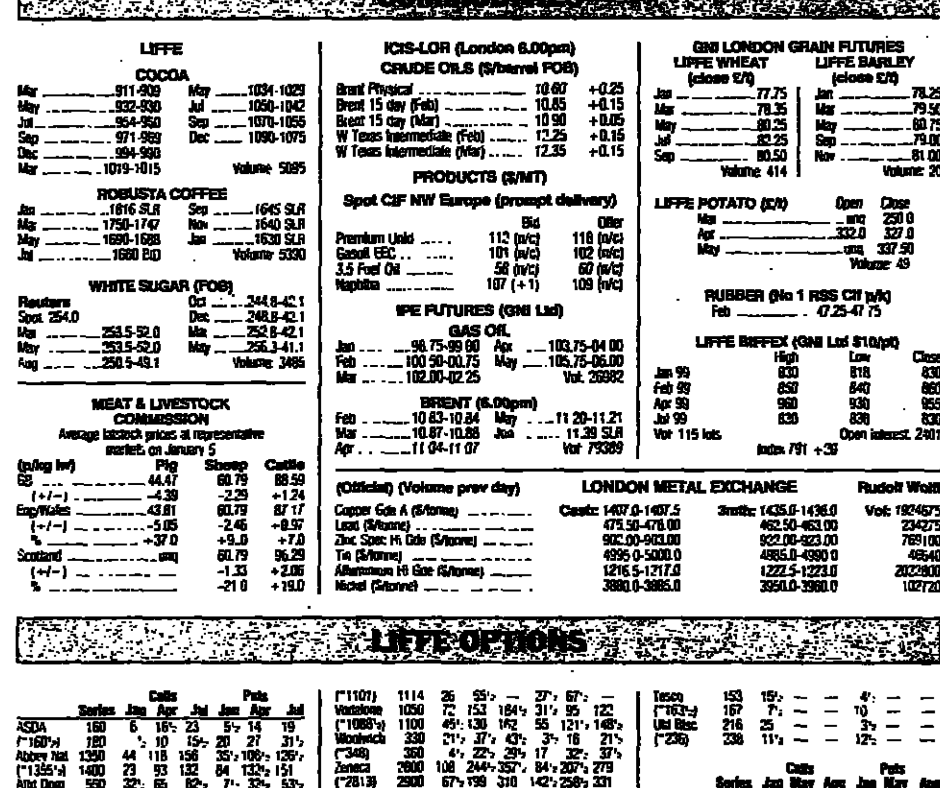
The construction arm has stopped chasing business for its own sake and Oliver Whitehead, chief executive, said the housing arm has not fallen into the trap of confusing market share with profits during the worries of imminent recession that clouded the latter half of 1998.

The land bank was tweaked last year after the purchase of Hassall in 1997 left McAlpine with sites it did not want. The group now says it has a better mix of locations, with higher potential margins.

McAlpine sensibly sold its US aggregates and civil engineering interests to Hanson last October, taking advantage of the boom in US road-building to secure an attractive price for its assets.

After that deal Tempus identified the upside to the shares, which then stood at about 130p. Their progress since should continue.

COMMODITIES



LIFFE

COCOA

Mar	911-909	May	1034-1029
May	932-930	Jul	1050-1042
Jul	954-950	Sep	1070-1055
Sep	971-969	Dec	1090-1075
Dec	994-990		
Mar	1019-1015	Volume	5095

ROBUSTA COFFEE

Jan	1816 SLR	Sep	1645 SLR
Mar	1750-1747	Nov	1640 SLR
May	1690-1688	Jan	1630 SLR
Jul	1660 BID	Volume	5330

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Oct	244.8-42.1
Spot 254.0		Dec	248.8-42.1
Mar	253.5-52.0	Mar	252.8-42.1
May	253.5-52.0	May	256.3-41.1
Aug	250.5-49.1	Volume	3485

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION
Average fatstock prices at representative markets on January 5

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB	44.47	60.79	88.59
(+/−)	-4.39	-2.29	+1.24
Eng/Wales	43.81	60.79	87.17
(+/−)	-5.05	-2.46	+0.97
%	+37.0	+9.0	+7.0
Scotland	unq	60.79	96.29
(+/−)	—	-1.33	+2.06
%		-21.0	+19.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)
CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	10.60	+0.25
Brent 15 day (Feb)	10.85	+0.15
Brent 15 day (Mar)	10.90	+0.05
W Texas Intermediate (Feb)	12.25	+0.15
W Texas Intermediate (Mar)	12.35	+0.15

PRODUCTS ($/MT)
Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	112 (n/c)	116 (n/c)
Gasoil EEC	101 (n/c)	102 (n/c)
3.5 Fuel Oil	58 (n/c)	60 (n/c)
Naphtha	107 (+1)	109 (n/c)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)
GAS OIL

Jan	98.75-99.00	Apr	103.75-04.00
Feb	100.50-00.75	May	105.75-06.00
Mar	102.00-02.25		Vol: 26982

BRENT (6.00pm)

Feb	10.83-10.84	May	11.20-11.21
Mar	10.87-10.88	Jun	11.39 SLR
Apr	11.04-11.07		Vol: 79389

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Jan	77.75	Jan	78.25
Mar	78.35	Mar	79.50
May	80.25	May	80.75
Jul	82.25	Sep	79.00
Sep	80.50	Nov	81.00
Volume: 414		Volume: 20	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Mar	unq	250.0
Apr	332.0	327.0
May	unq	337.50
		Volume: 49

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)
Feb 47.25-47.75

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

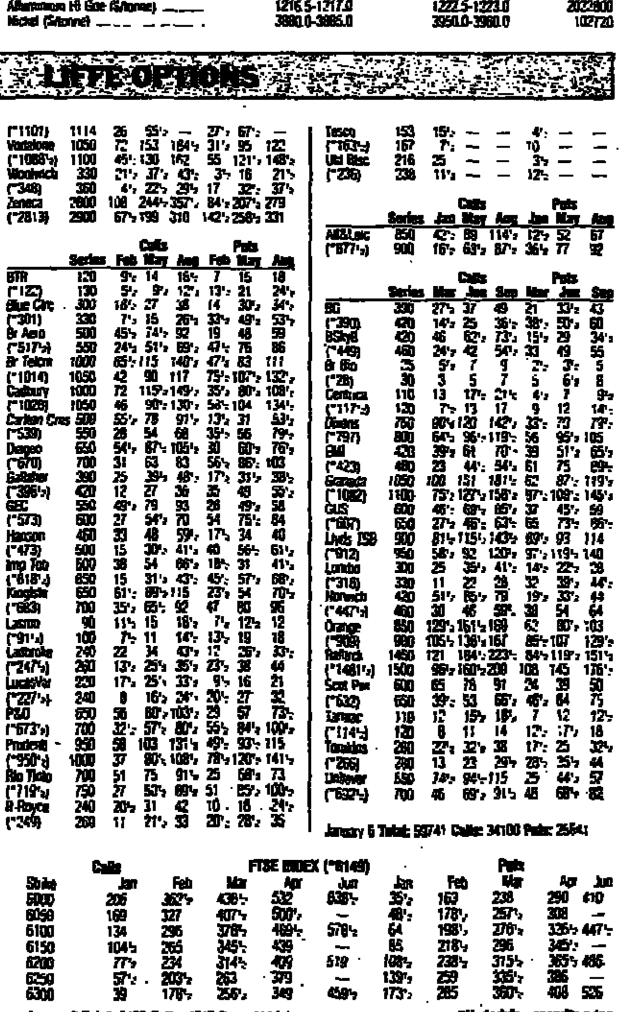
	High	Low	Close
Jan 99	830	818	830
Feb 99	850	840	860
Apr 99	960	930	955
Jul 99	830	830	830
Vol: 115 lots		Open interest: 2401	

Index: 791 +39

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE (Official) (Volume prev day) — Rudolf Wolff

	Cash	3mth	Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	1407.0-1407.5	1435.0-1436.0	1924675
Lead ($/tonne)	475.50-476.00	462.50-463.00	234275
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	902.00-903.00	922.00-923.00	769100
Tin ($/tonne)	4995.0-5000.0	4985.0-4990.0	46540
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1216.5-1217.0	1222.5-1223.0	2022800
Nickel ($/tonne)	3880.0-3885.0	3950.0-3960.0	102720

LIFFE OPTIONS



	Series	Calls Jan	Apr	Jul	Puts Jan	Apr	Jul
ASDA	160	6	16½	23	5½	14	19
(*160½)	180	½	10	15½	20	27	31½
Abbey Nat	1350	44	118	156	35½	108½	126½
(*1355½)	1400	23	93	132	64	132½	151
Alld Dom	550	32½	65	82½	7½	32½	53½
[illegible]							

	Series	Calls			Puts		
(*1107)	1114	26	55½	—	27½	67½	—
Vodafone	1050	72	153	184½	31½	95	122
(*1088½)	1100	45½	130	162	55	121½	148½
Woolwich	330	21½	37½	43½	3½	16	21½
(*348)	360	4½	22½	29½	17	32½	37½
Zeneca	2800	108	244½	357½	84½	207½	279
(*2813)	2900	67½	199	310	142½	258½	331
[illegible]							

	Series	Calls			Puts		
Tesco	153	15½	—	—	4½	—	—
(*163½)	167	7½	—	—	10	—	—
Utd Bisc	216	25	—	—	3½	—	—
(*236)	238	11½	—	—	12½	—	—
[illegible]							

FTSE INDEX (*6148) [illegible]

January 6 Total: 59741 Calls: 34100 Puts: 25641

January 6 Total: 5426 Calls: 4312 Puts: 1114 *Underlying security price

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Mar 99	119.30	119.35	119.00	119.16	23348
Previous open interest 102567	Jun 99				119.16	0
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Mar 99				116.74	0
Previous open interest 0						
Five Year Gilt	Mar 99				108.16	0
Previous open interest 76	Jun 99				108.16	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Mar 99	114.58	114.87	114.53	114.78	7955
Previous open interest 38621						
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Mar 99	129.73	129.98	129.65	129.81	2403
	Jun 99				128.71	0
Three Mth Sterling	Mar 99	94.430	94.440	94.390	94.400	35911
	Jun 99	94.790	94.810	94.770	94.790	25384
Previous open interest 1036345	Sep 99	94.930	94.950	94.900	94.910	22211
Three Mth Euromark	Jan 99				96.810	0
Previous open interest 2013228	Jun 99	97.010	97.025	97.005	97.020	47650
Three Mth Eurolira	Mar 99	96.890	96.898	96.880	96.890	2290
Previous open interest 497934	Jun 99	97.010	97.030	97.010	97.020	834
Three Mth Euroswiss	Mar 99	98.460	98.480	98.430	98.450	10723
Previous open interest 134152	Jun 99	98.360	98.380	98.330	98.340	6743
Three Mth Euro	Jan 99				96.810	0
Previous open interest 70484	Jun 99				97.020	0
FTSE 100	Mar 99	6030.0	6213.5	6010.0	6195.0	31069
Previous open interest 194338	Jun 99	6074.0	6074.0	6074.0	6238.0	25

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 6¼ Finance House 7
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 6¼ Low 5 Week fixed: 6¼
Treasury Bills (Dis): [illegible]

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Overnight: open [illegible], close 5					
Local Authority Deps:	[illegible]	n/a	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs:	4.98	n/a	5.04	5.02	5.02
Building Society CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro:	n/a	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yen:	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Canada:	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS

Bullion: Open: $287.35-287.75 **Close:** $287.20-287.70 **High:** $287.30-287.80
Low: $286.15-286.55 **AM:** $287.15 **PM:** $287.65

Krugerrand: $288.00-290.00 (£173.75-175.75)

Platinum: $360.00 (£216.85) **Silver:** $5.145 (£3.105) **Palladium:** $324.75 (£195.65)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for January 6	Range	Close	1 month	3 Month
Copenhagen	10.473-10.543	10.519-10.528	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro	1.4122-1.4142	1.4128-1.4138	0.16-0.19ds	0.47-0.51ds
Montreal	2.4897-2.5034	2.4992-2.5021	0.30-0.22pr	0.72-0.58pr
New York	1.6518-1.6616	1.6559-1.6567	0.16-0.14pr	0.40-0.37pr
Oslo	12.284-12.361	12.313-12.324	[illegible]	[illegible]
Stockholm	13.094-13.177	13.110-13.129	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tokyo	185.71-186.59	186.37-186.59	[illegible]	[illegible]
Zurich	2.2679-2.2856	2.2828-2.2856	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: Extel Premium = pr Discount = ds

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.5847-1.5873
Canada	1.5040-1.5050
Denmark	6.3488-6.3528
Euro	1.1718-1.1728
Hong Kong	7.7475-7.7480
Japan	112.20-112.30
Malaysia	3.7998-3.8002
Norway	7.4456-7.4556
Singapore	1.6760-1.6770
Sweden	7.9117-7.9217
Switzerland	1.3774-1.3784

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6554-1.6577
Australia dollar	2.6295-2.6353
Bahrain dinar	0.6155-0.6295
Brazil real*	1.9970-1.9995
Cyprus pound	0.8090-0.8270
Euro	1.4122-1.4244
Finland markka	8.2925-8.4275
Greece drachma	449.75-460.15
Hong Kong dollar	12.8244-12.6353
India rupee	69.42-71.02
Indonesia rupiah	12949.0-13229.0
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4925-0.5035
Malaysia ringgit	6.2898-6.2943
New Zealand dollar	3.0716-3.0775
Pakistan rupee	80.55 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.9425-6.0775
Singapore dollar	2.7743-2.7793
S Africa rand (com)	9.3710-9.5890
U A E dirham	5.9950-6.1310

Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

VOLUME

3i	1,507	Legal & Gn	3,344
ASDA Gp	32,347	Lloyds TSB	[illegible]
Abbey Ntl	3,466	LucasVarity	[illegible]
Allnce & Leic	884	Marks Spr	[illegible]
Allied Dom	2,071	Nat Grid	[illegible]
Allied Zrch	10,198	Nat Power	[illegible]
Amvescap	2,142	NatWest Bk	[illegible]
AB Foods	313	Norwich Un	[illegible]
Bk of Scot	4,822	Orange	[illegible]
BAA	4,175	P & O	[illegible]
Barclays	9,172	Pearson	[illegible]
Bass	1,945	PowerGen	[illegible]
BG	12,007	Prudential	[illegible]
Billiton	4,093	Railtrack	[illegible]
BOC	557	Reckitt Col	[illegible]
Boots	1,548	Reed Intl	[illegible]
BP Amoco	43,547	Rentokil	[illegible]
BAe	5,310	Reuters	[illegible]
BA	4,620	Rio Tinto	[illegible]
Brt Am Tob	3,634	Rolls Royce	[illegible]
Brit Energy	1,585	Ryl & Sun	[illegible]
BSkyB	4,357	Ryl Bk Sct	[illegible]
BT	27,211	Safeway	[illegible]
BTR	8,158	Sainsbury	[illegible]
CGU	3,153	Schroders	[illegible]
COLT Telecom	2,427	Scot & New	[illegible]
Cable Wire	8,302	Scot Sthn Engy	[illegible]
Cadbury	2,927	Scot Power	[illegible]
Carlton Cms	3,481	Securicor	[illegible]
Centrica	14,343	Sun Treal	[illegible]
Compass Gp	2,530	Shell Trans	[illegible]
Diageo	6,350	Siebe	[illegible]
Dixons Grp	3,330	Smiths Ind	[illegible]
EMI	4,488	SmKl Bch	[illegible]
Gallaher	15,404	Stagecoach	[illegible]
Gen Elec	5,083	Std Chartd	[illegible]
GKN	1,347	Sun Life	[illegible]
Glaxo Well	5,938	TeleWest	[illegible]
Granada	4,266	Tesco	[illegible]
GUS	4,685	Thames W	[illegible]
GRE	2,072	Tomkins	[illegible]
Hanson	1,604	Unilever	[illegible]
ICI	2,584	Utd News	[illegible]
Imperial Tob	15,293	Utd Utilities	[illegible]
HSBC	5,366	Vodafone	[illegible]
Halifax	2,100	WPP	[illegible]
Hays	1,774	Whitbread	[illegible]
Kingfisher	3,028	Williams	[illegible]
Ladbroke	3,270	Woolwich	[illegible]
Land Secs	2,856	Zeneca	[illegible]

NEW YORK

	Jan 6 midday	Jan 5 close
AEP	[illegible]	[illegible]
AMP Inc	[illegible]	[illegible]
AMR Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
AT & T	[illegible]	[illegible]
Abbott Labs	[illegible]	[illegible]
Advanced Micro	[illegible]	[illegible]
Aetna Life	[illegible]	[illegible]
Aflac	[illegible]	[illegible]
Air Prod & Chem	[illegible]	[illegible]
AirTouch Comm	[illegible]	[illegible]
Albertson's	[illegible]	[illegible]
Alcan Alumin	[illegible]	[illegible]
Allied Signal	[illegible]	[illegible]
Alum Co of Am	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amerada Hess	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amer Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amer Genl Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
Amer Home Pr	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]		

	Jan 6 midday	Jan 5 close
Eastman Chem	[illegible]	[illegible]
Eastman Kodak	[illegible]	[illegible]
Eaton Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]
Edison Intl	[illegible]	[illegible]
Elect Data Sys	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]		

	Jan 6 midday	Jan 5 close
Office Depot	[illegible]	[illegible]
Oracle	[illegible]	[illegible]
Oryx Energy Co	[illegible]	[illegible]
Owens Corning	[illegible]	[illegible]
PPG Industries	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]		

هكذا من الأصل

UK must play fantasy global league

All this week, the world's stock markets have been convulsed with rumours of global car mergers. At least the telecom sector, the other focus of investor mania, has seen real, if non-euro action.

The UK, while thrilling to the adventures of Vodafone, has almost alone been immune from this motor epidemic. The wheeled marital square dance has been an instant rerun of the birth of the euro. It is terribly exciting and important but we are on the outside looking in.

To our lasting industrial shame, Britain has long since been scratched from the world motor stakes. In the 1960s there were still half a dozen wholly British motor manufacturers worth the name. Now there are none.

Even fringe players such as Rolls-Royce Motors have been sold to foreign companies. Lacking the ability and the will to invest, the UK is simply not a player in this key global industry, as in others such as consumer electronics. We must live with this legacy of industrial, managerial and political failure. Much of value has been built from the wreckage in the past 15 years. By tackling labour anarchy, inflation, useless boards, and others of the ills that ground us down, we have turned Britain into an attractive centre for carmaking.

Three Japanese groups have started up here from scratch. BMW is investing billions in Rover. France's Peugeot has made a success of a shrunken Ryton plant in Coventry. Even Halewood in Merseyside, the unplanned prodigal son in Ford's family of plants, has unexpectedly saved itself. UK production and exports have recovered well, even if the motor trade is never likely to regain past glories.

Some of our strengths should endure beyond mere cost advantage. While British firms have ultimately failed, we have in Land-Rover, Jaguar and Rolls-Royce three of the most attractive upmarket brand names in world motoring. The limitations of being an attractive European platform for foreign multinationals are already being exposed by our self-exclusion from the euro. They are underlined by the merger fever set off by the bipolar DaimlerChrysler.

In the UK, we are free to play the fantasy motor league. If America can sustain only two entirely home-grown global car companies, because of the economics of manufacturing, design and marketing, surely neither Europe nor Japan can manage more. Toyota and VW look fairly sure of their places in the world league. Most of the remaining dozen must either form cross-country mergers on the DaimlerChrysler model, fortify their own niches or be taken over.

Only the time-scale and the feasible cultural affinities are in doubt. You can see Fiat doing business with like-minded Mitsubishi but not a Franco-Japanese alliance. Will Volvo or BMW sell out?



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Fun though this game of happy families is, the British reality is harsh. We are anxious spectators, not actors. Many of our key plants, especially Longbridge, Cowley and Sunderland, are mere pawns in games to be played by others. We need to learn the lessons. Making Britain a cheap, easy place to do business is a survival strategy.

If our people are skilled, our taxes and wages are low, our employment laws are investor-friendly and our currency either merged into the euro or kept internationally competitive, then the UK should earn a decent share of the jobs going in global industries. That framework is a key target for government. But it is not enough.

If we are to gain strength, let alone to lead Europe in prosperity, then Britain needs to host and control as many of the top global corporations as it can. Smaller businesses may be the vital innovators and job creators, but a vibrant team of global corporations will give us the best and safest jobs, create the spin-offs into service industries and deliver reliable wealth.

Motors and consumer electronics may be lost causes. Oil and pharmaceuticals are strong sectors we can be proud of, and will stay that way if our role in these industries is cherished in public attitudes and government policy.

In many other industries, all is to play for. In a potentially long list, telecommunications, defence, airlines, banking, insurance, broadcasting and food manufacturing all spring readily to mind.

France's obsession with national champions does not suit our ways. UK champions must choose themselves, via the marketplace. But we should not be as naive in such matters as we have been. French and Italian protection for motor manufacturers has worked. The weakness of Japanese corporations and the break-up of Korean conglomerates are not accidents but triumphs of US policy.

In defence, ministers have a pressing and crucial part to play to make sure that at least one of the world-class groups to emerge from restructuring is under British control and leadership. In other industries, we take a blinkered local approach, seemingly unable to combine consumer interest with industrial vision.

Electricity and gas firms have been hobbled by structural attack from regulators. British Telecom, more important in global terms, is in danger of succumbing to domestic sabotage. We fail to protect our branded food manufacturers from passing off by supermarkets. Even British Airways, which is unusually favoured, has been strategically disabled by our failure to tackle US protectionism.

On our behalf, the Cabinet should have the vision to take a few risks with short-term consumer interest to make sure that British firms become long-term players in global competition. Sitting around wondering who is going to shut which of our motor factories is not just humiliating. It is also lousy economics.

Single currency offers no easy route to European car market



AMERICAN AGENDA

BRONWEN MADDOX

As denials go, it was forthright. Ford Motor, the American car group that has been one focus of the frenzy of merger speculation at the Detroit show this week, has emphatically denied that it is about to buy either BMW or Honda. Jac Nasser, Ford's chief executive officer, called the suggestion "preposterous". At the same time, chatter that Fiat will announce an alliance, which has bubbled on for years, has reached a new boil on rumours of an imminant pact with Volvo. Nor were these suggestions roundly dismissed.

"Everybody is talking to everybody," Paolo Cantarella, Fiat's managing director, has said, with gusto. Such rumours are the stuff of Detroit, refined and modified each year to suit the current business fashion. Yet the chatter this week has contained a curious mixture of contradiction and overoptimism.

It has also been stirred further by the excitement over the launch of the euro, attracting enthusiastic predictions from President Clinton and sundry chieftains of corporate America about the era of European prosperity now beginning.

For sure, more giant mergers are likely to happen. But the growth in European sales which many assume will follow could still be elusive. The fuel for the gossip, of course, is last year's $40 billion creation of the transatlantic giant DaimlerChrysler. To many in the industry, that made the formation of huge international partnerships a matter of urgency. Executives have vied with each other to predict how many of the world's 20-odd leading car manufacturers will still exist in a decade's time: Jurgen Schrempp, Daimler chairman, says only ten; Ford's Alex Trotman famously says just five. DaimlerChrysler's Robert Eaton predicts a big European merger within three months.

True, consolidation makes sense. It has done for years, given the pressures on the industry. For several years, worldwide overcapacity and savage competition have pushed down prices, making the days of annual price rises a fading dream. This year there is new pressure on sales from the collapse in emerging markets.

But the consolidation of the global car markets remains one of those long-predicted business earthquakes that never quite happens. Each manufacturer has continued to hope, against the evidence, that it can gain share at the expense of others, without simultaneously eroding its return on capital. Whether it does will depend partly on the as-yet unproven success of the DaimlerChrysler merger. The difficulties of fusing the two cultures — which continue to be managed from separate headquarters in Stuttgart and Michigan — have been widely flagged.

In Detroit, it seemed that the company had finally thrashed out a solution to the problem of clashing structures of executive pay, under which German top executives have typically earned far less than their American counterparts. A package of share options and bonuses will now gradually bring Germans up to American levels. The company also continues to sound upbeat about the savings to be made, particularly in distribution. But it is striking how much emphasis it puts on a new drive for sales in its catalogue of the benefits of the merger. With Asian markets still depressed, the company made clear this week that it sees Europe as the best chance of giving the joint company a rapid boost in sales.

Whether those hopes are realised will play a large part in determining the shape of future mergers. There is, after all, a rich history of the mutual frustration of European and American car manufacturers penetrating each others' markets, despite decades of trying. Past successes are easily surrendered, as GM has found. Chrysler itself knows the problems well. One of the most telling comments this week in Detroit was the declaration by a senior Chrysler executive that "we've got less than 1 per cent of the market in Europe after 11 years of trying". Gary Valade, a member of the combined management board on the Chrysler side, said: "We know we can do better".

Chrysler's past difficulty in breaking into Europe is a text-book study in the pitfalls of transatlantic marketing. Its large, medium-priced cars, produced for the highly competitive American market, have suited neither the European taste for large, luxury cars, nor for small, cheap ones. Its 300M sedan, in particular, has proved too large for the European market.

It has also been hampered by concerns about quality and service, and by a paucity of dealerships. DaimlerChrysler now says it plans to use the Chrysler brand, possibly a new model based on the economy Neon car, to push its way into the European mass market. That seems far better judged than Chrysler's previous attempts, yet will require further heavy investment. It is a good reminder that even if the predicted mega-mergers take place, they may not lead to the rapid cost-cutting and easing of overcapacity that the industry's hordes of management consultants would like to see.

That is particularly true given the sensitivity of Europe's new centre-left governments to the threat of rising unemployment as the continent's growth slows. The political importance of car manufacturers remains; mergers predicated on huge job cuts may prove hard to agree. It is perhaps inevitable that a thick strand of Detroit speculation would spin out from this week's general euro-excitement in the US.

Mr Clinton, who has long backed the project of European economic integration, suggested that monetary union would boost European growth. American corporate executives have been queuing to pronounce on the new ease of doing business in Europe, and forecasting a wave of mergers and an intensification of competition. But the pitfalls are clear enough to make that optimism questionable. This week's Detroit chatter is bound to prove partly right, eventually.

More mergers will take place, until the industry's grotesque overcapacity shrinks. But as DaimlerChrysler shows, the profits from those deals will not flow automatically. Nor, even if they follow the transatlantic model of DaimlerChrysler, do they buy themselves a cheap bridge across the notorious ocean of differences between Europe and the US.



Globalised gossip: Jac Nasser dismissed as "preposterous" suggestions at the Detroit motor show that Ford is about to link up with Honda or BMW

System on trial in search for City justice

The final resolution of the dispute between Keith Percy, chief executive of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management at the time of the Peter Young affair, and his regulator, Imro, underlines how difficult it can be for City executives to challenge a disciplinary sanction.

After more than two years of wrangling and hundreds of thousands of pounds in costs, Mr Percy has agreed to accept a reprimand from Imro, primarily so that he can return to fund management in his full capacity as a registered individual.

Few executives even get to the stage of considering a tribunal hearing, according to legal experts. This is principally because most disputes are settled before any penalty is made public, altough the regulators deny there is any plea-bargaining.

Individuals who do not accept the proposed sanctions can go to a tribunal, and if they lose can appeal. Many, however, find that the odds are heavily loaded against them and some have gone so far as to complain that the appeals system is contrary to the laws of natural justice.

Lindsay Hill, a partner with Fox Williams, the City legal firm, helped to mount a successful challenge to a Securities and Futures Authority ruling against Ron Baker, the Barings director and immediate boss of Nick Leeson, the rogue trader. Mr Hill says the deterrents against the tribunal route are manifold.

First, there is the expense. MGAM agreed to meet the initial costs of the five directors, including Keith Percy, who resigned amid the Young scandal, but not to finance a challenge at tribunal level. It is estimated that it would have cost Mr Percy at least a further £1 million to take his case before the tribunal. There is no legal aid available for such cases.

Then there are legal costs to be taken into account. Unlike in civil court cases, if the complainant wins, the costs are not paid by the regulator — unless "unreasonableness" on the part of the watchdog can be proven. Should the claimant lose, however, he must pay a percentage of the regulators' costs.

Thirdly, individuals must work with a paucity of information. Mr Hill says it is often difficult to obtain sufficient information from a regulator to mount an adequate defence. Although there are rules of disclosure, they are not as broad in a civil case.

Fourthly, the complainant can expect a lack of support from witnesses. Individuals are frequently unwilling to give evidence in favour of the complainant because they fear upsetting the regulator. Most witnesses will, of course, be regulated by the same body.

On top of this, it is often difficult to co-ordinate a defence. A legal firm may act on behalf of the company under investigation, but not the individuals involved - or vice versa. The regulators can thus drive a wedge between the two parties, often at the expense of the individuals, says Mr Hill.

Lastly, the tribunal is a long, drawn-out process. While companies are usually permitted to continue trading during the course of the investigation, the authorisation of key individuals is usually suspended, barring them from working in the industry and effectively preventing them from earning.

Individual executives have taken on the forces of regulation and won. Mr Baker succeeded in having four out of five SFA charges overturned after a tribunal hearing, while one of his colleagues accepted a ban. In the end, it was the Department of Trade and Industry that did for Mr Baker, disqualifying him as a director in December.

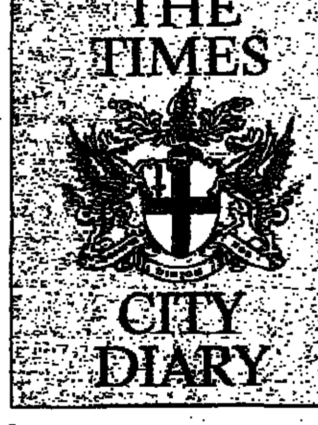
Some of the complaints have not fallen on deaf ears. The Financial Services Authority, the statutory watchdog replacing the current patchwork of regulators, is consulting the industry about the application of its proposed enforcement powers, dubbed by some as draconian.

Chief among the proposals is the creation of an independent tribunal under the control of the Lord Chancellor's Department. There is also behind-the-scenes debate as to whether individuals should be entitled to legal aid.

For Howard Davies, chairman of the FSA, it will be a tricky trial to find the correct balance between effective regulation and natural justice.

RICHARD MILES

Hamster jam



IF YOU have tears still to shed, shed them for the 19 hamsters on Death Row at the Corporation of London. Today an Italian national will appear before Highbury Corner Magistrates Court to face charges under the importation of animals legislation and of animal cruelty after he was apprehended in Camden.

The charges were brought by the Corporation's animal welfare officers after a van was discovered carrying 23 of the beasts, plus a guinea pig. For some bizarre historical reason the City Corporation owns the Animal Reception Centre at Heathrow, which is where the animals, minus four hamsters that had to be destroyed, are now housed.

Next the tricky bit. They have to be kept in quarantine for six months to prevent the importation of rabies — a rabid hamster? Doesn't bear thinking about — at a cost of £1,000 apiece. This is a lot for a hamster, especially as they only live for two years so, statistically, a quarter will not make it.

So the beasts face an appointment with their Maker within 15 days — unless Mario Avagliano, 28, pleads not guilty, in which case they must be kept for the duration of the trial.

The reception centre is not suitable for any extended period. Free kennels are needed for the Heathrow 19, plus guinea pig, or, I suppose, a corporate sponsor for their quarantine. Otherwise it's the chop.

A bright side to this grim tale: there is I am told, "considerable media interest" building among the local papers and at least one TV company. I will keep you posted.



"While we're at it, remember that coffee I paid for"

A COLLEAGUE was charmed to receive a card yesterday addressed, from the writing, by a highly literate eight-year-old. The first class stamp suggested that the offspring of a friend had been anxious to speed the arrival of this year's thank-you letter. Inside was an "exclusive invitation" for a Barclayloan, at a none-too-exclusive APR of 15.9 per cent. The higgledy-piggledy writing, on closer examination, was computer-generated, designed to ensure the junk mail did not go into the bin unread.

Euro-torpor

AN OUTBREAK of euro-indifference on the Continent. This would be understandable after the past week's blanket coverage, except that it was last year, when they should have been fascinated by the approach of the single currency.

Consultancy Prowse & Co has looked at the accounts of the 100 top companies in Europe, including the British, and found that barely half made any reference to ther euro in their message to shareholders. To companies such as BMW, Siemens and Alcatel Alsthom, as was, the event does not even rate a mention. Curious.

On message

I WROTE yesterday of Chris Gent, Vodafone chief executive, and his cricket-watching holiday in Australia, just as the company was trying to take over AirTouch. The company's smug justification for this absence was that he could easily keep in touch because the mobile phone network worked perfectly there.

An e-mailer contacts me from Australia to point out that this is hardly surprising. The network is run by Optus, part owned by Cable & Wireless — one of Vodafone's main rivals.

ON MARCH 11 and 12 the Treasurers' Forum will meet outside Paris to hear keynote addresses from Our Ken Clarke and Jean-Claude Trichet, governor of the Bank of France, and lots and lots about the euro. Implementation of the euro, corporate risk management, "multi-currency and cross-border pooling" and something called VaR (sic) in the corporate environment.

It does sound fun! Entirely appropriate, says my source, that they are all meeting at Disneyland.

Goofy

WHILE we are on the subject. I have a copy of Michael Eisner's annual letter to shareholders of The Walt Disney Company, of which he is chairman and chief executive.

In California, or alternatively, I suppose, in Disneyland they produce a different sort of chairman's statement. He begins: "I am looking out the window and can see the seasons change (yes, the seasons do change in Los Angeles — the eucalyptus leaves droop more and the sprinklers go on less often) . . ."

There follow a further 12 homespun, folksy paragraphs. He recalls the time when "we held a senior management retreat at my parents' apple orchard in Vermont. Although we were a week late for 'cow appreciation day' in Woodstock, we were not too late to cruise Sam's Army and Navy Store (recently renamed Sam's Outfitters for political correctness)."

I think he means they had a good year.

MARTIN WALLER



Michael Eisner was sorry to miss cow appreciation day in Vermont

BUSINESS LETTER

Visible success could not have been achieved by an invisible minister

From Lord Simon of Highbury, the Minister for Trade & Competitiveness in Europe

Sir, Your Commentary "Crisis, what crisis at the Treasury" (January 6) claimed that I have been "almost invisible" in my Ministerial role.

Invisible to whom? Not to the 1,000 small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to whom I spoke at breakfast, lunch and dinner meetings throughout the country before the bilateral exchange rates were announced on May 2, as they debated with supply chains and colleagues how best to compete in the coming crucial years. Not to the 1.6 million people running SMEs to whom I wrote in September about the need to prepare for the launch of my "beloved" euro, whether we join EMU or not. Not to the chairmen of the 12 regional fora to whom I spoke on how British business needs to take advantage of the new opportunities that the more transparent single market place will offer. Not to the attendees of around 200 other public engagements I have fulfilled since I joined the Government.

When I was in business, I was judged by my results. I expect no different in Government. As a result of the efforts of the Euro Preparations Unit (EPU), and the value that I trust is added by my visibility, we have carried out one of the most successful Government to business information campaigns ever, resulting in over 340,000 requests from SMEs and trade associations for our factsheets, over 300,000 accesses to our website, with an average ten "hits" per access, and over 100 articles written for trade/sectoral press. Our second benchmarking survey of SMEs shows that 70 per cent of SMEs were aware of our campaign and the number of those who had made preparations had increased by 150 per cent.

The implications of the historic change EMU represents may not be easy to understand, but the Government has a duty, and I have a job, to ensure that UK business is realistic and competitive in its approach to the growing European commercial opportunities. We have not achieved the above results by being invisible.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID SIMON,
Treasury Chambers,
Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG.

Body Shop appoints Murray

Body Shop, the cosmetics group, has given its management team another shake-up with the appointment of a new finance director. Alastair Murray joins the company from PIC International where he was finance director of its food ingredients arm for four years.

The move follows the appointment last year of Frenchman Patrick Gournay as chief executive, replacing co-founder Anita Roddick, who became co-chairman alongside Gordon, her husband.

Jeremy Kett, the group's current finance director, will become head of corporate finance and remain on the main board until May, when the company announces its final results.

BWI to go private

Managers of BWI, the supplier of processing and packaging equipment for consumer industries, are hoping to take the company private. The company said yesterday it had received a number of approaches, including one from an MBO team. The announcement lifted BWI shares 22½p to 69p, valuing the company at about £32 million. Only last year BWI completed the $69 million (£42 million) purchase of RA Jones, a US competitor. The company's main shareholders include PDFM, which has 17 per cent of the shares.

Avonside bid

Avonside Group, which provides services to the building industry, admitted yesterday it had received an approach that may lead to a takeover. The company's shares climbed 7½p to 47½p, which capitalises the company at about £19 million. Interim results for the current year showed a rise in pre-tax profits to £1.7 million from £1 million.

Avonmore boost

Avonmore Waterford, the food manufacturer based in the Republic of Ireland, is investing €40.82 million (£28.8 million) in operations in America and Britain. In the UK the company is expanding its Cuisine Foodservice business at Tamworth, Staffordshire, to include fresh meats.

Government threat sees creation of semiconductor giant

Hyundai and LG in chip deal

BY CARL MORTISHED
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

TWO giants of the South Korean electronics sector have agreed to merge their semiconductor businesses after threats from the Government forced LG to drop its opposition to a virtual takeover of its operation by Hyundai.

LG Group said yesterday that it would merge its chip unit with its opposite number at Hyundai and said that it would not be taking a stake in the new company.

The combined group will be one of top three producers of memory chips globally, alongside Japan's NEC and Samsung also of South Korea. However, it could encounter opposition from competition authorities as the merger will reinforce South Korea's control over some 40 per cent of the market in D-Ram chips.

Siemens, which last summer announced the closure of its Tyneside plant with the loss of 1,100 jobs, has blamed South Korea for the precipitous fall in chip prices.

The merger of LG Semicon with Hyundai Electronic Industries is likely to force a decision on the future of large investments in Scotland and Wales. Both companies have invested heavily in new memory chip plants in Britain, though Hyundai's plant in Dunfermline has been mothballed and completion of the LG Semicon facility in Wales has been in doubt because of the catastrophic plunge in the price of semiconductors.

The South Korean Government has been pushing its debt-strapped conglomerates to consolidate their interests in a market suffering huge overcapacity and an initial 70/30 split was agreed in September but the two companies fell out over the issue of control. Arthur D. Little, the management consultancy, was appointed to advise on the structure of the group and recommended that Hyundai take the lead. LG initially refused to co-operate and threatened to sue the consultants.

However, the South Korean Government stepped up the pressure on the debt-strapped LG by threatening to use its influence over South Korea's banks to call in loans. The electronics group owes over $6 billion (£3.6 billion), mainly to domestic banks.

The merged group will be saddled with about $9.5 billion in debt but Hyundai said yesterday it would be seeking some $1.5 billion in foreign investment in order to take the lead in the chip market. The company claimed that the new group could produce 280,000 wafers a month, ahead of Samsung which controls 18 per cent of the market.

Britain has suffered a spate of closures and threats to foreign-owned chip plants. In addition to the troubles at the UK plants of LG, Hyundai and Siemens, Fujitsu has shut down a plant in Durham. A wafer fabrication plant in Wales owned by QPL International of Hong Kong also recently fell victim to the slump, claiming 500 jobs.

KP Crisps to shed 250 jobs at Billingham

BY SAEED SHAH

KP CRISPS yesterday announced that 250 workers will lose their jobs at its Teesside factory due to restructuring required to cope with the highly competitive UK crisps market.

The plant at Billingham, which makes the McCoys and Brannigans brands, has suffered as a result of changing consumer tastes and lack of promotion by KP, which is owned by United Biscuits. The redundancies will leave 1,350 workers at the site.

The humble fried potato, or crisp, the staple of children's lunchboxes for decades, has lost out to new savoury snacking trends, said Rob Mears, sales director at KP Crisps.

He said, "Crisps have been the engine of growth but UK consumers have become more discerning."

Michael Landymore, food analyst at Henderson Crosthwaite, said: "The market is flat as a pancake and there is too much capacity. KP Crisps has lost out to the likes of Walkers who have put more money behind marketing."

According to Snacma, the snack industry association, the UK crisps market was worth £1.1 billion in 1997 and savoury snacks as a whole is now valued at £2 billion, of which KP Foods has 21 per cent and Walkers Snack Foods takes 45 per cent.



Thierry Demarest, right, with François Cornelis, of Petrofina, when the takeover was announced

Total lifts earnings forecast

BY CARL MORTISHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

THIERRY DESMAREST, chairman of Total, has increased his forecast of the earnings boost from the oil group's takeover of Petrofina, its Belgian rival.

M Demarest, who has been on a charm offensive designed to woo sceptical financial analysts and investors over the Petrofina deal, said that earnings would rise up to 15 per cent as a result of the takeover, up five points from his previous forecasts.

He also revealed that Total's 1998 net profit would be just 10 per cent below the previous year's total of €1.16 billion (£830 million), in spite of a 30 per cent slide in the oil price. M Demarest said that the result was a markedly better performance than expected from Anglo-Saxon oil groups.

The merged Total Fina will have production capacity of 1.5 million barrels per day by 2005 compared with Total's current production of 800,000 barrels per day.

M Demarest forecast that the merged group's return on assets would be one percentage point higher by 2003, ranging from 13 to 17 per cent on oil price expectations of $13 to $15 per barrel.

Eisner's Disney pay is almost halved

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN LOS ANGELES

WALT DISNEY, hit by an overall slowdown last year and a dismal fourth quarter, cut the salary and bonus of Michael Eisner, its chief executive, by almost half, to $5.8 million (£3.5 million), last year.

Mr Eisner last year received a base salary of $764,423 and a bonus of $5 million. In 1997 he was paid a salary of $750,000 and a bonus of $9.9 million.

Forbes Magazine last September estimated that Mr Eisner was worth $710 million, based on stock options, bonuses and other perks. Disney and Mr Eisner have come under criticism for his lucrative pay package.

Disney's 1998 financial year, which ended last September, was weak compared with previous years, with net profits rising just 4 per cent, to $1.9 billion, on a 6 per cent gain in revenues. The entertainment group was hurt by the Asian meltdown, and its film studios suffered from box-office losses and weak video sales. Also, its ABC television network had low ratings.

In November, Disney reported a 28 per cent drop in fourth-quarter net income as poorly performing films, disappointing video sales and other problems held back earnings.

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Systems set to recognise pecking order

THE ICE BOX
THE HOT NEWS ON INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND ENTERTAINMENT

THERE has always been something rather egalitarian about computers in the workplace. If a corporate network breaks down — or, more commonly, slows down — everyone suffers equally.

Not any more. A deal to be announced today between Microsoft, Cisco Systems and Compaq will allow IT directors to decide which employees deserve to have the fastest access to a corporate network.

Obviously, this is bad news for anyone at the bottom of the food chain in any large organisation, but it could help companies to use their IT systems in a far more efficient way.

Phil Smith, Cisco's business development director, is typically euphemistic. "What you actually do is give a base level of service to everyone," he says. "And then on top of that give a premium service to those who need it most."

There are many practical examples of why such technology can be useful. Any company's accounts department would benefit enormously from extra network capacity — or bandwidth, as IT people call it — at the end of the financial year. This would allow their computers to work faster to complete accounts on time, and reduce the risk of a network crash.

It may be annoying for those in another department — say personnel — to suffer at the expense of accounts. However, the situation could be reversed at different times of the year, for example, during early autumn when lots of graduates are being recruited.

The consortium of companies behind the technology calls it a "policy-based system". It is also known as a "directory-enabled system" because it learns the identities — and therefore importance — of all a company's employees. In an international organisation, an employee could log on to a terminal in any country and always be given the same amount of bandwidth.

Another advantage to the system is that it allows employees to book extra bandwidth in advance. This could be useful for video conferences, which require enormous amounts of network capacity.

Companies that conduct a lot of business online — such as City brokers — could also find the system useful. They can simply allocate more bandwidth to their most lucrative clients, thus making sure that all their deals are prioritised and go through their computer systems first.

As Mr Smith says: "Networks will become more discerning — channelling power where it is required, but with sufficient deftness to apply privileges to individuals. That translates into a greater return on investment from the network."

As with most modern IT systems, it is also brutally easy to erase people from the system if they are sacked. "Access privileges can be easily terminated with a click of a mouse," Mr Smith says.

☐ THE Ritz-Carlton is considering hiring "technology butlers" for its US and European hotels after the success of a trial at its Kuala Lumpur property. The butlers were hired to cope with the high-tech demands of travelling executives, and can help to solve problems ranging from jammed fax machines to malfunctioning laptops.

☐ JOHN HAINE, a founder director of Ionica, the wireless telephone company that went into administration last year, has joined TTP Communications, a Cambridge supplier of technology for mobile phones. He will run the division of TTP responsible for UMTS, the next-generation standard of mobile communications that will allow mobile phones to access the Internet at high speeds.

CHRIS AYRES

Self-assessment's human cost

BY FRANK HASKEW AND FRANCESCA LAGERBERG

TAXPAYERS who have yet to submit their 1998 income tax return are now under pressure to file it before the January 31 deadline, or face the automatic £100 penalty. The latest figures show that four million tax returns (nearly half the expected number for the year) have still to be filed. Many of these returns will probably make it to the Inland Revenue on time, particularly those in the hands of professional advisers. However, for the unrepresented, self-assessment is still a daunting prospect.

Self-assessment is now reaching the conclusion of its second full year of operation. The Revenue has just announced the results of a public consultation on the self-assessment system. It tucked away the full findings of this consultation on its Internet home page but the results show that aside from the expected teething problems, there is still much room for improvement. One particular aspect highlighted by respondents to the consultation was the complexity of the forms that taxpayers had to complete. The worry and confusion caused to taxpayers appears at times to be completely disproportionate to the tax being collected. While the introduction of self-assessment cost £800 million, according to the Revenue, what has been the human cost?

Consider just two random examples of ordinary people who are struggling with self-assessment. Just prior to the last self-assessment deadline a little old lady was spotted at the front of a post office queue asking to send a document by recorded delivery. She had her tax return, and was desperate to ensure that it reached the Revenue before the deadline. She was in deep conversation with the cashier, and it became clear she was a troubled lady. She had in the recent past sold her house and its contents and moved into sheltered accommodation. She did not understand the tax relating to the sale of her house, she could not find the relevant documentation and was very distressed about completing her tax return form.

The second example is of a highly numerate, retired engineer. Like most retired people on a pension with a few investments, his financial affairs were modest, but completing his tax return proved to be an uphill struggle. His comments are worthy of recording, in full. "I haven't a clue what I am doing. I am just putting figures into boxes parrot fashion, with no idea of what I am trying to achieve, and whether it is correct."







Form-filling has been a great stress for some, say Francesca Lagerberg and Frank Haskew

These two people were ordinary law-abiding senior citizens, the sort of people who would never knowingly submit an incorrect tax return. Both of them were under great stress, and it was clear that they felt let down by the tax system.

Are these two isolated experiences? Sadly it would appear not. So what has gone wrong? Self-assessment was sold to taxpayers as a clearer tax system, which would sweep away many of the complexities found in the old system, producing benefits for taxpayers, or "customers" as they are now known. Taxpayers have a right to feel short-changed, because for many it has clearly failed in that aim. The main benefits appear to accrue to the Revenue, which has passed on much of its work to the taxpayer. This may have produced great cost savings for the Revenue, but left many taxpayers confused and bemused.

Whose fault is it? It would be easy to blame the Revenue. While this may be true up to a point, it is not the whole story. Self-assessment might have been a clearer system if concerted action had been taken to simplify the tax system, for example, by abolishing the schedular system and simplifying reliefs. Instead, recent Chancellors have undertaken a course exactly opposite to this: over the past ten years, the volume of tax rules has doubled, and much of this has occurred in the past five years. Many of these unwelcome complications started when Norman Lamont attempted to disguise numerous tax increases. This trend has been continued in a most able fashion by the latest Chancellor. All indications are that it will get even worse.

The tax calculations are now so complicated that many tax professionals struggle to understand them. If they are struggling, what hope is there for the ordinary taxpayer? We suspect very little. For many ordinary taxpayers, self-assessment has resulted in a massive shift in the burden from the State to the individual. For many, that burden is too great to bear lightly. Unfortunately, unless our overloaded tax system is subject to fundamental reform designed to make it easier to understand and to calculate tax liabilities, things are unlikely to improve, and could well get much worse. Tinkering with the words is not good enough. A few years ago, a colleague described self-assessment as "a ticking time bomb which will blow up in the face of the next Government". He has a nasty habit of being proved right.

Frank Haskew and Francesca Lagerberg are tax managers with the Tax Faculty of the ICAEW.

Financial reporting needs Aussie touch

AUSTRALIANS like to make their points of view plain. Take the cricket, for example. On the opening day of the Melbourne Test, which was before a great English victory and before the Gough hat-trick had restored some dignity, it rained all day. One Melbourne paper ran a front page consisting of a huge photograph of a glum Australian batsman surveying the scene from the dressing room window. The headline read: "No Runs. No Wickets. No Play. Damn. Not A Bad Day For The English."

This is not simple pom-bashing — the press was astonishingly generous when, three days later, the English had won the match. But it is the principle that the views that you hold should be strong and that people should be in no doubt what they are.

[redacted]

ROBERT BRUCE

One exponent of this is Ken Spencer. He is chairman of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB). But perhaps more importantly he is current chairman of the eccentrically titled G4+1. This group consists of representatives of the standard-setting bodies of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and America. Spencer pursues his task with good Australian zeal. When the International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC) was railroading its financial instruments rules towards agreement just before Christmas the only voice of protest was that of Spencer and the AASB. What he was protesting about was that the IASC needed to have this last loose-end tied up before putting its package before IOSCO, the stock exchanges' organisation, in the hope that it will rubber stamp the IASC rules as a route towards acceptance on the world's, and more importantly, America's, stock exchanges.

The rules were a compromise and the Australians said so. "As soon as you move away from full fair value," said Spencer, "it's a compromise and you have to write long rules to make the compromise work. We could have lived with the compromise if the rules were rigorous." But people were saying: "We don't know what this section means - we just need to get it done." So the Australians became the only member of the IASC to vote against. The UK, France and America abstained. Everyone else voted the compromise through. It can only lead to more problems ahead.

The Australians' uncompromising stance extends to other areas. And this is where the G4+1 importance comes in. There is a vacuum at the heart of global financial reporting rules at the moment. The IASC is making a rather unconvincing bid for leadership. Continental Europeans are suspicious, quite rightly, of America's perceived dominance via its Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). There is a great need for a body that seems to represent a wider community and one that is not exclusively powered by politics. The G4+1 currently fits that bill.

It has grown quite remarkably in influence and scope of work. And now it has released its first position paper. This deals with one of the most contentious areas around. What is known in the UK as merger accounting and around the rest of the world as pooling is monstrously flawed. As we all know, there is no such thing as a merger. There are only takeovers, regardless of the nice words said at the time. But if you claim something is a merger, and no large corporate organisation would do otherwise, then you use the pooling rules which mean that you add everything together, make no adjustments, and make few difficult charges to the reported figures.

What the G4+1 paper makes clear is that this should be booted into touch. In future, companies that "merge" should restate assets and liabilities at current values. And, like big boys, they should take the hit in their financial reporting. Which is what happens in Australia, where pooling is simply not permitted.

It would be good to think that the rest of the business world would follow the G4+1 lead. But, in Spencer's view, the problem is deep. "We are conceptual rather than pragmatic in our approach," he said, wearing his Australian hat. "The UK is simply pragmatic. America is conceptual in approach and then is beaten over the head by a very powerful business lobby until it turns pragmatic."

The result is that flawed financial reporting rules around the world make life much more difficult than it should be. The blunt Australian approach to life, and cricket, should perhaps be applied to financial reporting. "We are isolated geographically," said Spencer, "so we feel the need to be keener to participate." And there is another effect of this. "There is no point in us flying 24 hours and then sitting quietly at the meeting."

It would be good to see this attitude fade away when applied to cricket. But the financial reporting world could do with more of this blunt approach.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

May's day of cricket glory

TIM MAY, the one-time Australian spin bowler, was probably the most noted accountant in the country to take to the game. These days he is chief executive officer of the Australian Cricketers' Association and he has just written his first book, which purports to be a "trueish" account of the team on tour. In it he describes his beginnings. "I was an accountant," he said. "Accountancy is not fun. My discipline was auditing. Auditing is less fun." Then one day at an accounting conference he got the call. Over the Tannoy came the message: "Would Tim May please go to the foyer: your parents are on the phone. They wish to congratulate you on being picked in the Australian Cricket Team." As May triumphantly recounts: "I was now Tim May, Australian cricketer. I was no longer Tim May, Auditor. This was a significant change."

Same old story

BRITISH accountants would smile at what is happening in Australia. Last year the elitist Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia announced that a merger with the larger Australian Society of CPAs should go ahead. Familiar arguments about speaking with one voice were heard. The institute produced market research showing that gaining the two-thirds majority would be a doddle. So what happened? Only half those who had said they would vote did so. And they threw the idea resoundingly out. Now come the recriminations. One investor argued that accounts depend on sampling techniques so what confidence can the investing public have in published accounts if the institute gets the sampling of its members' opinion so wrong? A past president of the society said very simply of the institute: "These guys are never going to agree. They may not be in existence in 50 years but let them suffer." Accountants seem to behave the same the world over.

In the Nec

THE Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia prides itself on its traditions, and it needs to after the failure of its merger attempt. Perhaps the problems are those traditions. Its coat of arms suggests derring-do. Fearsome peregrine falcons hold up the arms. *Nec Tunens Nec Farens* the words proclaim — "Without Fear, Without Favour". It is a shame that accountants do not emblazon that mission statement more prominently around the world.

ROBERT BRUCE

Equities poised near record high

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
645	385	Allied Domecq	574	+ 19	4.4	15.0
412½	291½	Bulmer (HP)	335	- 4	5.7	14.7
42½	7	Burn Stewart	17½	- ½		
795	402	Diageo	670	+ 4½	3.8	20.3
900	675	Glenmorangie A	690		2.7	18.5
325	225	Highland Distl	306		4.4	12.2
244	115	Matthew Clark	242		6.7	8.2
59½	18½	Minmet W	27½	- 1		
2021½	725	SA Breweries	1100	+ 62½	3.6	14.0

BANKS

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

BUILDING MATERIALS

CHEMICALS

CONSTRUCTION

DISTRIBUTORS

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

ELECTRICITY

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

ENGINEERING

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

HEALTHCARE

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

INSURANCE

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

LEISURE & HOTELS

MEDIA

MINING

OIL & GAS

OTHER FINANCIAL

PHARMACEUTICALS

PRINTING & PAPER

PROPERTY

RETAILERS, FOOD

RETAILERS, GENERAL

SUPPORT SERVICES

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

TRANSPORT

WATER

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

LONGS (over 15 years)

UNDATED

INDEX-LINKED

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7979 Dealing: 0171 407 7888				
Protected Funds				
UK Safeguard	142.89	152.27	...	...
-do- NAV to Jun 19	135.00	135.00		
UK Equity Safeguard	115.49	123.52	- 2.49	2.02
-do- NAV to Mar 19	110.98	110.98	.	..
US Eqy Safeguard	95.08	101.08	- 0.24	
Cash	958.06	983.85		6.25
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	438.83	465.16	- 8.02	1.80
UK Small Cos	82.25	87.96	- 0.38	0.60
FTSE 250 Index	100.00	106.96	- 3.69	1.89
Geared UK Index	#24.339	#25.894	+ 0.74	5.75
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	87.47	90.31	- 0.11	6.66
Monthly Inc	44.13	47.16†	- 0.55	7.92
International Funds				
American Gen	376.02	397.98	+ 3.06	0.17
American Star	173.40	184.87	+ 3.92	
JG US Index	#29.038	#30.593	+ 0.58	4.50
European Gen	466.32	493.30	+ 5.07	
European Star	209.60	224.67	+ 6.01	
Japan Gen	105.30	111.09	- 0.74	.
Asia Pacific	64.84	69.23	+ 3.11	1.09
Pacific Star	86.47	92.48	- 0.46	.
Greater China	161.09	172.29	+ 7.69	
Latin America	60.36	64.55	+ 1.11	...
Intl Growth	197.47	211.11	- 3.81	0.11
Balanced Europe	182.32	188.94		2.18
Global Strategy	44.90	48.02	+ 0.98	
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS				
01203 553 231				
AXA Equity & Law Unit Tst				
Balanced Acc	84.12	89.49	+ 1.06	1.64
Balanced Inc	75.57	80.39	+ 0.95	1.64
Brit Growth	132.70	141.30	+ 4.10	2.31
Brit Fndmtls Acc	170.20	181.10	+ 3.50	3.84
Brit Fndmtls Inc	105.60	112.30	+ 2.10	3.84
Europe	620.29	659.80	+12.20	0.55

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
CANADA LIFE MGMT (UK) LTD				
01707 622 140				
Can Gen Dist	315.70	334.80	+ 8.20	
-do- Income Dist	172.20	182.50	+ 4.20	
-do- Accum	592.80	628.30	+14.40	
Gilt & Fxd Int	49.38	51.69	- 0.02	
Growth Units	377.70	403.10	+11.80	
Bond	209.50	220.60	- 0.10	
Intl Growth	281.30	299.60	+ 0.80	
North American	417.60	443.20	+ 0.60	
Far East	186.80	198.70	+ 5.30	
UK Smaller Cos	254.80	272.50	+ 3.10	
European	149.50	159.00	+ 1.90	
Japanese Growth	28.67	30.38		
High Income	300.00	320.60	+ 7.20	
CAPEL-CURE MYERS UT MGMT LTD				
0161 831 7433 Enq 0161 831 7433 Dlg 0161 831 7435				
American & Gen	358.20	378.80	+ 2.20	
European Inc	162.80	172.20	+ 2.40	
Smaller Cos (4-1)	103.49	110.10	+ 0.04	
Growth	758.10	806.50	+26.10	
Income & Growth #	595.90	634.00	+13.30	
-do- Accum #	969.30	1031.20	+21.60	
Japan & Gen	49.39	52.20	- 0.27	
Hallmark Gwth	1747.00	1820.00†	+46.00	
-do- Accum	2224.00	2317.00	+58.00	
Special Sits	173.60	184.70†	+ 5.70	
High Yield	1931.60	1981.00	+43.80	
CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
0171 606 0708				
Cazenove Portfolio	126.51	134.53		
American Portfolio	207.14	219.28	+ 3.12	
European Portfolio	227.91	242.08	+ 4.32	
High Income	60.13	63.69		
Japanese Portfolio	40.41	49.35	.	
Pacific Portfolio	107.10	115.17	.	
UK Equity	125.59	133.84		
UK Equity & Bd	73.49	77.90	..	

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
UK Special Sits	70.09	74.76	+ 1.49	0.27
Fd of Inv Tsts	59.57	63.54	+ 1.05	...
High Income #	67.24	71.71	+ 1.02	4.18
Financial Opps	78.31	83.52	+ 1.77	0.73
Growth & Income #	57.03	60.83	+ 1.38	2.14
Global Opps	57.04	60.83	+ 0.75	0.72
LAURENCE KEEN UNIT TRUST MGMT				
0171 588 8880				
Bridge Income #	415.97	442.52	+ 6.38	4.49
Eur Growth	140.40	149.36	..	0.60
Inc & Growth	101.28	107.74†	+ 2.79	1.72

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
-do- Accum	143.80	151.30	+ 0.70	2.13
Sth East Asia	233.30	246.70	+ 5.00	1.91
-do- Accum	322.40	340.90	+ 6.90	1.91
UK Equity #	83.80	88.80†	+ 2.30	3.99
-do- Accum #	247.70	261.90†	+ 6.80	3.98
UK Growth	1582.50	1673.60	+43.70	1.46
-do- Accum	1814.30	1918.60	+47.80	1.46
MGM UNIT MANAGERS LTD				
Dealing: 01277 261 610 Enq: 01903 204 631				
European Growth	180.15	188.03	+ 3.27	0.28

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Smaller Cos	108.49	115.42	+ 0.76	1.69
Eur Spec Sit Inc	55.38	58.91	+ 0.36	2.47
Eur Spec Sit Acc	59.72	63.53	+ 0.39	2.47
Penny Growth	53.59	57.01	+ 0.92	1.54
LAZARD UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
Dealing: 0870 6066408				
UK Cap	595.50	631.80	+16.50	1.34
UK Inc/Gth #	640.00	673.00	+17.32	3.17
UK Income #	427.80	452.40	+ 8.30	4.34
UK Income Acc #	451.60	479.10	+ 8.70	4.34
UK Sm Cos	307.20	328.60	+ 2.10	2.16
Euro Gwth	275.00	290.80†	+ 4.30	0.23
N Amer Gwth	180.10	190.40	+ 1.24	.
Pacific Growth	6.09	6.45†	+ 0.06	0.27
Emg Mkts Gwth	52.86	56.08†	- 0.05	
Japan Growth	46.90	49.55	- 0.36	.

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Intl Bond	65.85	70.21†	+ 0.34	2.77
Intl Equity Growth	117.13	124.30†	+ 1.57	0.36
N Amer Growth	219.62	232.88	+ 2.72	0.13
Special Sits Growth	39.17	41.67	+ 0.76	1.44
UK Growth	648.46	689.85	+12.91	1.85
-do- Accum	932.58	992.10	+18.56	1.85
MW JOINT INVESTORS LTD				
01629 826567				
Balanced Fd #	1561.80	1585.00†	..	2.90
Income #	1292.20	1312.30†	...	3.80
MALDON UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0131 222 4242				
Maldon General	197.80	202.40†	. .	3
MANEK INVESTMENT MGMT LTD				
0171 615 7870				

Court of Appeal

Law Report January 7 1999

Council failed to maintain road ice-free

Goodes v East Sussex County Council

Before Lord Justice Morritt, Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Hutchison

[Judgment December 21]

A highway authority, by failing to act expeditiously to prevent ice from forming on the surface of a road, were in breach of their statutory duty to maintain it.

The Court of Appeal so held by a majority (Lord Justice Aldous dissenting) in a reserved judgment allowing an appeal by the plaintiff, Geoffrey Graham Goodes, from a decision of Judge Hargrove, QC, sitting as a judge of the Queen's Bench Division, in favour of the defendants, East Sussex County Council.

Mr J. G. R. Ross and Mr Richard Carron for Mr Goodes; Mr Christopher Wilson-Smith, QC and Mr John Stevenson for the defendants.

LORD JUSTICE HUTCHISON said that on November 14, 1991, at about 7.10am, the plaintiff was driving his motor car along the A267 road between Five Ashes and Mayfield in Sussex when, as he was in the process of overtaking other vehicles on a straight stretch of road at a place known as Wellbrook Hill, his vehicle skidded on ice on the road surface and left the road.

The plaintiff, who sustained injuries of the utmost severity in the accident, brought proceedings against the defendants, the highway authority responsible for the repair and maintenance of the road, alleging that they were responsible by reason of their failure to maintain the road by keeping it free from ice.

The central issue before the judge, who said that he could find no want of care in the plaintiff's driving, was whether the defendants had been shown to be in breach of their statutory duty to maintain the road.

That duty was imposed by section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 which provided:

"(1) The authority who are for the time being the highway authority for a highway maintainable at the public expense are under a duty ... to maintain the highway."

Section 329 of the 1980 Act provided:

"'Maintenance' includes repair and 'maintain' and 'maintainable' are to be construed accordingly..."

Section 58(1) of the Act provided that in an action for damages arising out of the authority's failure to maintain:

"... it is a defence ... to prove that the authority had taken such care as in all the circumstances was reasonably required to secure that the part of the highway to which the action relates was not dangerous for traffic."

The defendants had pleaded a section 58 defence but it was abandoned in the course of the trial.

At 11.45pm on November 13 Mr Hemsley, the defendants' area highway superintendent for Wealden Division, received from the Southampton Weather Centre over the telephone a weather forecast which contained a warning of frost. In response to that message Mr Hemsley, having discussed the matter with Mr Luff, the deputy divisional engineer, arranged for the roads to be pre-salted, starting at 5.30am.

Pre-salting was intended to prevent the formation of ice on the road surface rather than to disperse ice already there.

It was common ground that the lorry that covered the network of road which included Wellbrook Hill on Mr Hemsley's instruction would have reached the place where the accident occurred within 15 minutes after its occurrence.

The most recent authoritative review of the law relating to the liability of a highway authority under section 41 was to be found in Cross v Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council ([1998] 1 All ER 564).

The real thrust of the plaintiff's case was that there had been a culpable failure to prevent the formation of ice when there was ample time and adequate means to do so.

His Lordship said that once Mr Hemsley and Mr Luff had decided that the forecast conditions were such as to necessitate pre-salting, there was no escape from the conclusion that logic and the proper performance of their duty to maintain the highway dictated that the gritting vehicles should be ordered out at such a time that they would be able to complete their rounds by the time the frost was sufficient to give rise to a real risk of dangerous icy patches on the roads.

There was a likelihood of ice forming from about 6am and, since the object of the exercise was to prevent that happening, the decision at 11.50pm should have been to send out the vehicles not later than 4am.

For there to be a breach of the duty to maintain in cases where the cause of the foreseeable danger to traffic was presence on the road surface of some substance such as ice, sufficient time had to have elapsed to make it prima facie unreasonable for the authority to have failed to take remedial measures.

That formula, which derived from the judgment of Lord Justice Goff in Haydon v Kent County Council ([1978] QB 343, 363), was framed in terms appropriate to a case where what was in issue was whether remedial measures should have been taken by the authority.

It required some adaptation where the criticism was of a failure to take preventive measures, as in the present case.

Here, the relevant question should be: had the authority, once they became aware of what they accepted was a need to take preventive measures, acted with, prima facie, appropriate diligence in implementing those measures?

If they had, there would be no breach of duty. If they had not, they would be thrown back on their statutory defence.

It seemed to his Lordship that, in the present case, where the decision was that what was called for was pre-salting as preventive action, and there was no impediment to its being started at a time which would have achieved that objective, a breach of duty could be said to be established.

His Lordship would therefore allow the appeal and direct that judgment be entered for the plaintiff on the issue of liability.

However, his Lordship regarded the law, as it at present appeared to be in that area, to be less than satisfactory and ripe for review.

LORD JUSTICE ALDOUS, dissenting, said that in Haydon, according to Lord Justice Goff, the question for the court was: did the conditions arise as a result of the authority's fault or had a sufficient time elapsed so as to make it unreasonable to fail to take remedial actions?

It followed that in the case of ice and snow the authority would not normally be in breach of duty provided they took remedial action such as clearing, gritting or salting, in a reasonable time.

Lord Justice Shaw in that case came to the same conclusion for the same reasons.

The Court of Appeal in Cross sought to apply the law as enunciated in Haydon.

In his Lordship's view there was no unreasonable delay in removing the ice in the present case, and his Lordship would dismiss the appeal.

Lord Justice Morritt concurred with Lord Justice Hutchison.

Solicitors: Townsends, Swindon; Wynne Baxter Godfree, Lewes.

Limit to extent of indemnity relief of company

In re Duckwari plc (No 2)

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice Thorpe

[Judgment November 19]

The extent of the indemnity relief to be granted to a company in respect of an arrangement entered into in contravention of section 322 of the Companies Act 1985 (substantial property transactions involving directors, etc) was limited to the loss or damage resulting from the acquisition of property and did not include the borrowing costs incurred in acquiring it.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment in determining the amount to be granted to Duckwari plc following an earlier judgment (The Times May 18, 1998; [1998] 3 WLR 913) declaring that an arrangement made between it and the respondents, Offerventure Ltd and Mr Brian S. Cooper, concerning the purchase of a property at Corporation Street, High Wycombe, in 1989, resulted in a recoverable loss to Duckwari plc.

Mr David Richards, QC and Mr Kenneth Craig for Duckwari; Mr Philip Hoser for Offerventure and Mr Cooper.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE said in May the court had allowed Duckwari's appeal against the decision of Judge Paul Baker, QC and discharged his declaration that the arrangement between Duckwari and the respondents had resulted in no damage to Duckwari.

The effect of that decision was to hold that the respondents were, in broad terms, jointly and severally liable to make good to Duckwari the loss caused to it by the depreciation in value of the property.

In discussion with counsel after judgment it became clear that the extent of the relief to be granted to Duckwari remained a matter of acute controversy and that further argument would be necessary. Argument was heard on July 30, when judgment was reserved.

The extent of the relief to be granted to Duckwari depended on the effect of section 322(3)(b) of the Companies Act 1985 which provided that the respondents were jointly and severally liable to indemnify Duckwari for "any loss or damage resulting from the arrangement or transaction".

So, in order to be recoverable, the loss or damage had to result from the "arrangment" or "transaction" each of which had to be identified: see section 322(1).

No difficulty had been caused by the identification of the arrangement. But the arguments advanced by counsel had demonstrated that the identification of the transaction as the purchase was insufficiently precise. A distinction had to be made between Duckwari's acquisition of the property and the means by which it was acquired.

Mr Richards argued that the transaction entered into in pursuance of the arrangement was not simply the acquisition but included the means by which it was acquired, in particular the borrowing of £350,000 from the bank.

Thus, he claimed that the loss or damage resulting from the transaction included actual and notional compound interest paid or owing to the bank.

Mr Hoser said that the only transaction falling within section 322 was Duckwari's acquisition of the property pursuant to the contract. That and that alone, he contended was the "substantial property transaction" involving a director within the marginal note to section 320 and the borrowing from the bank could thus not be part of a transaction entered into in pursuance of an arrangement for the purposes of section 322.

Mr Hoser's argument was to be preferred. The loss or damage recoverable under section 322(3)(b) was limited to that resulting from the breach, in other words from the acquisition itself.

Judgment should be entered for Duckwari for the acquisition costs of the property less the net proceeds of its sale in 1997 together with simple interest at base rate plus 1 per cent.

Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice Thorpe agreed.

Solicitors: Clarks, Reading; Vizards.

Power to cancel registration of society

In re Wimbledon and Merton Democratic Club Society Ltd

Before Mr Justice Jonathan Parker

[Judgment December 4]

Where a registered friendly society ceased to exist but subsequently reconstituted itself, the Registrar of Friendly Societies retained a power under section 16(1)(a) of the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965 to cancel registration on the ground that the revived society was a new and different organisation.

Mr Justice Jonathan Parker so held in the Chancery Division when dismissing an appeal brought in the name of the Wimbledon and Merton Democratic Club Society Ltd from a decision of the Registrar of Friendly Societies who, by a notice dated November 7 1997, proposed to cancel the society's registration on the ground that it had ceased to exist.

Mr Andrew Fraser-Urquhart for the Wimbledon and Merton Democratic Club Society; Mr Michael Green for the Registrar of Friendly Societies.

MR JUSTICE JONATHAN PARKER said that the society was first registered in 1893 and served from that date primarily as a working men's club.

In the early 1980s the society began to experience financial problems and had to sell its premises in Wimbledon. After all outstanding debts were cleared, a balance of some £22,000 remained which was placed in a building society.

In 1994, discussion began with the registrar with a view to securing dissolution of the society. It was proved to the satisfaction of the registrar that the society had ceased to exist and he issued a notice before cancellation of registration pursuant to section 16(1)(a) and (3) of the 1965 Act.

The society then appealed that decision on the ground that it was still in existence and intended to merge with another like minded society.

Mr Fraser-Urquhart argued, inter alia, that the society had remained in existence throughout, albeit in a dormant fashion.

Even if the society for formal purposes had ceased to exist it had re-constituted itself and in those circumstances the registrar's discretion to cancel registration as a matter of law could no longer be used.

Finally, Mr Fraser Urquhart relied on the word "may" in section 16(1) to submit that the registrar had a discretion whether to effect cancellation where he had concluded that a society no longer existed. That discretion should not have been exercised in circumstances where a society was revived.

His Lordship said that on the evidence the society had ceased to exist and once that had been established, the appeal had to fail. The proposition that the registrar had no power to cancel the registration of a revived society was subject to a fallacy. A revived society, where it had ceased to exist, was a new and different society.

As to the discretion under section 16(1), his Lordship agreed with Mr Green. The word "may" did not import a discretion but imposed an administrative power on the Registrar to keep the register up to date.

If his Lordship was wrong on that point, he said that he could not envisage any circumstance where the registrar could conclude that a club had ceased to exist and yet go on to decide not to cancel registration.

Solicitors: Keegan Williams, Morden; Treasury Solicitor.

Court of Appeal

User's motives relevant to whether objective test satisfied

Pro Sieben Media AG v Carlton UK Television Ltd and Another

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Henry and Lord Justice Robert Walker

[Judgment December 17]

The test of whether an extract from a copyright work had been used by another "for the purposes of criticism or review" so as to bring it within the defence provided in section 30(1) of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, was an objective one; but the user's subjective intentions or motives were relevant to whether the material's use satisfied the test of fair dealing on which that defence also depended.

The Court of Appeal so held when allowing an appeal by the defendants, Carlton UK Television Ltd and Twenty-Twenty Television Ltd, from the decision of Mr Justice Laddie (The Times September 24, 1997) that they had infringed the copyright of the plaintiffs, Pro Sieben Media AG.

The main infringement was in the inclusion of a 30-second extract from a programme, "TAFF", broadcast by Pro Sieben on German television on August 27, 1996, in a programme called "The Big Story: Selling Babies", made by Twenty-Twenty and broadcast by Carlton on UK television on August 29, 1996.

The TAFF programme featured an interview with Mandy Allwood who in March 1996, while undergoing a course of fertility treatment, had become pregnant by her boyfriend, Paul Hudson, and was found to be carrying eight live embros. All eight subsequently died.

The pregnancy received wide publicity at the time, and on the advice of a public relations consultant, Mr Max Clifford, Ms Allwood entered into various contracts, including one giving Pro Sieben exclusive rights to broadcast an interview in Germany. The interview, conducted in English with German voice-over, included footage of Ms Allwood and Mr Hudson visiting a toy shop in Wimbledon to buy eight teddy bears.

"The Big Story" was Carlton's flagship current affairs programme. The edition titled "Selling Babies" was about cheque-book journalism and concerned "ordinary people who, when something extraordinary happens in their lives, now see it as a way of making huge sums of money".

It introduced the extract from TAFF with the following words: "We proudly present to you for free this first British showing of Mandy and Paul's exclusive which cost German television £50,000. After then days of muck-raking, a sanitised version of the truth, tightly controlled by Max Clifford."

In fact, the TAFF programme was available to British viewers with the right kind of satellite dish; and Mr Clifford had actually only received £30,000 from Pro-Sieben, but had told Twenty-Twenty he received £50,000.

The programme ended with an interview with Mr Clifford himself who, when asked if he had ever lied, said: "Frequently, of course. I'm a PR. We lie all the time."

The judge concluded that Carlton's use of the TAFF extract came within neither of the defences under section 30 of the 1988 Act, which provides:

"(1) Fair dealing with a work for the purposes of criticism or review, of that or another work or of a performance of a work, does not infringe any copyright in the work provided that it is accompanied by a sufficient acknowledgment.

"(2) Fair dealing with a work ... for the purpose of reporting current events does not infringe any copyright in the work provided that ... it is accompanied by a sufficient acknowledgement."

Mr Michael Silverleaf, QC and Mr Mark Vanhegan for Carlton; Mr Martin Howe, QC and Miss Charlotte May for Pro Sieben.

LORD JUSTICE ROBERT WALKER said the judge must have had well in mind the proper balance which the 1988 Act sought to achieve between the interests of the creative author and the wider public interest of which a very important part was freedom of speech.

There had been little dispute about the general principles applicable to the issue of fair dealing, whether under section 30(1) or (2). It was a question of degree, or of fact and impression.

The degree to which the challenged use competed with exploitation of copyright by the copyright owner was a very important consideration, but not the only one. The extent of use was also relevant, but its relevance depended on the circumstances.

If the fair dealing was for the purposes of criticism, that criticism might be strongly expressed and unbalanced without forfeiting the fair dealing defence. An author's remedy for malicious and unjustified criticism lay in the law of defamation, not copyright.

There was no authority on whether the words "for the purpose of" in section 30(1) and (2) imported an objective test, as Pro Sieben contended, or a subjective one, as Carlton contended.

But it seemed to his Lordship that in the composite phrases "for the purposes of criticism or review" or "for the purpose of reporting current events" the mental element on the part of the user was of little more importance than in such everyday composite expressions as "for the purpose of argument" or "for the purpose of comparison". The intentions or motives of the user of another's copyright material were highly relevant to the defences available under section 30(1) and (2), but mainly on the issue of fair dealing.

It was not necessary for the court to put itself in the shoes of the infringer of the copyright in order to decide whether the offending piece was published "for the purpose of criticism or review".

"Criticism and review" and "reporting current events" were words of wide and indefinite scope, which should be interpreted liberally. The judge should have taken as his starting point that Carlton's programme was criticising various works representing the fruits of chequebook journalism, of which the TAFF report was only one. A number of UK newspapers were also mentioned and quoted.

The programme's strongest message was that chequebook journalism was deeply inimical to truth. It divided the media into the "haves", who had bought an exclusive story and thought it entitled them to present it as they saw fit, and the "have nots", who resorted to spoilers to upset their rivals, regardless of hurt to individual feeling.

Truth was an early casualty in such battles, which could be very traumatic for the ordinary people involved, even if they made some money out of it.

The judge erred in principle in focusing too much on the actual purposes, intentions and motives of those involved in the Carlton programme's production, and too little on its likely impact on the audience.

In his Lordship's judgment, the programme as a whole was made for the purpose of criticism of works of chequebook journalism in general, and in particular the recent treatment by the media of Ms Allwood's multiple pregnancy.

The use of the extract was fair dealing within section 30(1) since the extract used was short and did not in any realistic sense unfairly compete with Pro Sieben's exploitation of its exclusive right; and the inclusion of Pro Sieben's logo in the televised extract constituted sufficient acknowledgement.

Regarding section 30(2), Ms Allwood's pregnancy, its progress and its eventual outcome were current events of real interest to the public, and the volume and intensity of media interest were sufficient to bring the media coverage itself within the ambit of current events. On that basis, too, the use of the extract was fair dealing. It followed that both defences under section 30(1) and (2) were made out.

Lord Justice Henry and Lord Justice Nourse agreed.

Solicitors: Henry Hepworth; Frere Cholmeley Bischoff.

Scots Law Report January 7 1999 Outer House

No duty of care to disappointed spectator

MacDonald v Federation International de Football Association and Another

Before Mr Robert McEwan, QC

[Judgment December 2]

Where jurisdiction over a defender was asserted on the ground that he was being sued jointly and severally with another defender who was domiciled within the jurisdiction, dismissal of the action against the latter did not deprive the court of jurisdiction over the former.

The organisers of neither a national nor an international football competition owed a spectator a duty of care for any loss he suffered after the team of another country failed to appear to play a match after the international organisers had changed its time by some hours because the floodlighting at the football ground in that other country was inadequate.

Mr Robert McEwan, QC, sitting as a temporary judge in the Outer House of the Court of Session, so held, dismissing an action brought by Mr John MacDonald seeking damages jointly and severally from the Federation International de Football Association and the Scottish Football Association.

Mr Peter McDonald for the pursuer; Mr Craig Connal for the FIFA; Mr Eugene Creally for the SFA.

HIS LORDSHIP said that in October 1996, the pursuer had travelled to Tallinn to watch a football match between the Scottish and Estonian national teams at which the Estonian team had failed to appear.

The match was to have been played in the evening but the day before the match the SFA had said that the floodlights were unsuitable and the FIFA had changed the kick-off time to 3.00pm.

The pursuer averred that the Estonian team then decided not to turn up. The FIFA were averred to have been under a duty not to alter the kick-off time so close to the game that the Estonian team would not turn up.

The SFA were averred to have been under a duty to take reasonable care to ensure that the match could be played at the time that had originally been agreed, and hence to have had a responsibility to ensure that the floodlights were adequate. Counsel had referred to the World Cup rules without objection.

In his Lordship's opinion a spectator at a sporting event had no proximity to the organisers for the purposes of the law of delict, excluding the well known category of cases where personal injury occurred.

It was not for his Lordship in such a case to make any incremental increase in the categories of liability without a clear analogous case.

As to what was fair, just and reasonable, if the present kind of claim were allowed it would open the way to many claims by an indeterminate class of people disappointed at the outcome or organisation of a sporting event.

That might even extend to people who watched an event on television. The insurance consequences would lead to great difficulties. His Lordship could not do otherwise than find that the case against FIFA was not relevantly averred.

In relation to the SFA, it had no control over the decision to re-time the match, nor over the adequacy of the floodlights, and it was not averred that it could have foreseen that the home team would not appear.

Since all that the SFA could do was to make representations and the primary cause of any loss was the Estonians' failure to turn up, it would not be fair, just or reasonable to impose liability on the SFA.

His Lordship did not think it helpful to compare either defender to a public authority. They were self-regulating bodies with their own rules.

A plea to jurisdiction had also been taken, because the FIFA were domiciled in Switzerland. The pursuer's basis for jurisdiction was that they were sued jointly ad severally with the SFA. FIFA contended that if the case against the SFA was dismissed, then there was no jurisdiction against FIFA at all.

The pursuer contended that the matter had to be tested when the action began; once FIFA were properly convened then the court had jurisdiction whatever happened to the case against the other defender.

For that purpose there had to be a connection between the claims of such a kind that it was expedient to determine the actions together to avoid irreconcilable judgments from separate proceedings.

The matter of jurisdiction was to be decided at the time when proceedings were instituted: see Kalfelis v Bankhaus Schröder ([1988] ECR 5565).

His Lordship was quite unable to conclude that the separate claims did not have a sufficient connection or that it was inexpedient to determine them together. The plea of no jurisdiction would be repelled.

Law agents: Drummond Miller, WS; McGrigor Donald; Burness, WS.

English personal injury case to apply in Scotland

McNulty v Marshall's Food Group Ltd

Before Lord MacFadyen

[Judgment October 23]

Wells v Wells (The Times July 20, 1998; [1998] 3 WLR 329), a decision of the House of Lords on calculating the lump sum to be awarded to a plaintiff in a personal injury action for future loss and expenses, should be followed in Scotland.

Lord MacFadyen, sitting in the Outer House of the Court of Session, so held granting decree for payment by Marshall's Food Group Ltd to Mr James McNulty of £235,105.

Mrs Ann Paton, QC and Mr Philip Stuart for the pursuer; Mr Neil McKinnon for the defenders.

LORD MacFADYEN said that the pursuer claimed damages for loss of future earnings because of personal injuries. There was a dispute about the proper approach to selection of the multiplier.

The pursuers submitted that the Ogden tables should be taken as the starting point, selecting a multiplier by reference to the figures for a rate of return of 3 per cent: see Wells v Wells.

The use of the tables as the starting-point rather than a check on a multiplier derived from comparable cases was a departure from the approach sanctioned in O'Brien's Curator Bonis v British Steel plc (1991 SC 315): see also Hunt v Severs ([1994] 2 AC 350).

Mr Mackinnon had submitted that his Lordship should continue to follow the O'Brien approach in preference to Wells. In his Lordship's view it was appropriate that he should follow the guidance given by the House of Lords in Wells.

That guidance had been concurred in by the two Scottish members of the committee, who had expressed no reservation about its applicability in Scotland. O'Brien had been cited in argument in Wells. There appeared to be nothing that would make the guidance inappropriate for use in Scotland.

Moreover, if the calculation was to be based on a 3 per cent return, that undermined the O'Brien approach of referring primarily to comparable cases, because any comparable cases would have proceeded on the superseded assumption of investment in a mixture of equities and gilts yielding a return of between 4 and 5 per cent.

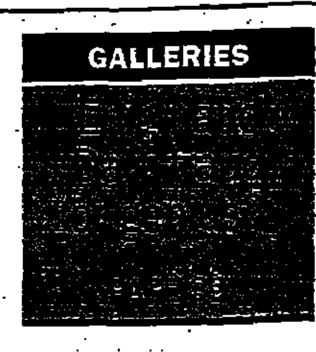
Law agents: Thompsons; Simpson & Marwick, WS.



NEW VIDEOS
Big monster hits the small screen
PAGE 38

THE TIMES ARTS

GALLERIES





Change in the weather

THEATRE



The lady in front of me thought there was something wrong with the big black speakers beside the Barbican stage, which were creaking and groaning in electronic agony as she took her seat. But, no, it was Adrian Noble's way of preparing us all for a good powerful storm. First, a tiny boat was seen floundering in vast violet drapes. Then the action moved to the deck of a boat which seethed, palpitated, creaked, groaned and split to some splendidly ferocious thunder and lightning. Clearly we were in for a bold, imaginative staging of the finest of Shakespeare's late romances.

Bold and visually arresting Noble's *Tempest* proved at Stratford a year ago, and bold and arresting it still is. But as often happens with RSC transfers, changes have occurred — some are more welcome than others. What were relatively dramatic, simple effects have been elaborated, which in the case of the low comedians is fine, since they are now as funny as I have recently seen. But I am less sure about David Calder, whose Prospero was the fascination and glory of Noble's revival last year. He is tracking a more intricate path through the play, and has lost as much as he gains.

He is still an imposing yet sensitive magus. He still surprises you with the physical delicacy with which, bulky though he is, he pads about the gravelly circle that is his island kingdom. He is still vocally rich and versatile, though now maybe to excess, since you are sometimes more aware of the complex music rising from his throat than of what he is actually saying. He has also answered those who felt that otherworldliness was missing from his performance. The famous speech about the dissolution of those cloud-capped towers and solemn temples is as weirdly, dreamily prophetic as it should be.

But at Stratford he made you feel that Prospero's bitterness at old wrongs was stronger, more obsessive. You felt a dangerously moody, volatile man was fingering wounds that were still open, still raw. Until Scott Handy's unearthly Ariel declared that he would pity Prospero's foes "were I human", you actually felt that he might not forgive bad Antonio and worse Sebastian.

Calder has not ditched this unusual and rewarding reading, but he has made it less emphatic and obvious. He uses his magic staff to make his victims writhe with cramps, but there is now no serious chance he will turn them into toads or beetles. The result is, I suppose, a subtler performance: but the cost is some loss of dramatic tension as well as less impact when Prospero does bring himself to kiss his odious, usurping brother.

Nevertheless, Calder still commands the stage, still leaves you wondering why he is not the household name that many a less feeling, intelligent and technically resourceful actor has become. The supporting performers remain a bit uneven — a symptom of the difficulty the RSC is finding in attracting the consistently excellent performers it once did? — but in one area are actually better than before. The scene in which Ariel plays havoc with the play's lowlife is far more drunken and, with Adrian Schiller's Buster-Keaton-like Trinculo unable to sit down, the wailing blend of red-eyed lynx and mud-caked cur that is Robert Glenister's Caliban unable to get up, and Barry Stanton's huge, pompous Stephano repeatedly mistaking sprinklings of booze for a divinely ordained rainstorm, it is particularly hilarious — but then all the clowning combines inventiveness and guile.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Scott Handy (Ariel), David Calder (Prospero), Barry Stanton (Stephano), Adrian Schiller (Trinculo)

For your eyes only?

Nicolette Jones on the problems libraries face in screening smut from the young

Now that the Government has introduced an initiative to get all public libraries linked up to the Internet, one big moral and legal issue has arisen: should anyone who uses a library have access to anything that is published on the Internet? Will the Government end up paying for schoolchildren to search every site devoted to sex? Will men in dirty macs be subsidised to abandon the back row of sleazepit cinemas in favour of screened-off terminals in their local libraries? Or should access be limited by web filters that censor material that could be harmful to minors?

A recent case in America has complicated the question. A library in Loudon County, Virginia, had installed blocking software to protect children using the Internet. A coalition of civil liberties groups sought to have it removed, arguing that the library should not be reduced to "the electronic equivalent of the children's reading room". A federal judge agreed. Filtering was unconstitutional.

In Britain, the Bill of Human Rights became law on November 9, and one of its clauses states that "everyone has the right to freedom of expression". We are now legally bound by something that resembles the American Constitution. It may only be a question of time before libraries which are in the process of being connected to the Net and are still debating what filtering systems, if any, to apply, find their right to be selective about Internet access legally challenged, not least because of the existence of a Campaign for Internet Freedom which opposes all filtering software.

At present, under the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act, libraries are obliged to provide "a comprehensive and efficient service for people who live, work and study" in their catchment areas. Nobody has yet defined precisely what "comprehensive" means. Librarians make decisions about what books to select on the basis of inexact or idiosyncratic criteria which vary in different parts of the country, but the Library Association's Intellectual Freedom and Censorship Policy Statement (1998, revised since 1963) declares that librarians "shouldn't restrict access to books except as required by law", and is entirely on the side of freedom of access to information. Your local librarian may have used professional discretion in choosing the books that are bought, but will never refuse to get hold of a legally published book for you through the library service's network.

> 'The only foolproof filter is to sit next to a child at a terminal'

On occasion, though, libraries will put books "behind the counter", stocking books but not putting them on public display. This has happened in certain libraries in the past with, for instance, Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, Madonna's *Sex* and Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs. There are odd moments, too, of caution on the part of librarians: one recalls, for example, putting an alphabetical guide to London behind the counter, because under "g" it told readers how to sniff glue.

A similar kind of discretion may be applicable to the Internet, because some filtering software can be turned off when adults are using the terminals. This will be one of the options considered by the Library Association's working party, set up a few months ago to look into the question of filtering. Research has already shown, though, that the filters themselves are of variable use. If you filter by keywords, for instance, you can find "pussycat" filtered out of nursery rhymes, and "button" out of government physics archives. Even with site blocking, or using a new system called PICS (Platform for Internet Content Selection) of rating the offensiveness of websites, offensive material can get through.

Fortunately for libraries, though, they shouldn't be liable if they let users make free with unsuitable material. In another American test case, a mother prosecuted because her son downloaded pornographic pictures from a terminal in the library. She lost her case, because the access provider was not responsible for material others made available. Her lawyer remarked: "Parents do not understand how dangerous the library has become for children."

So letting your kids go to the library could be like sending them off to the pub, the casino or the strip joint. The only foolproof filter is to sit next to a child who is using a terminal. Parents have been warned.

In all shapes and surprises

CIRCUS

For most of my life the art of the circus has been on its last legs, and since those legs belonged to troupes of performing horses, elephants and tigers, their exit from the world of entertainment is an unmourned departure. For a while it looked as though clowning and acrobatics would follow them into the past, but the French-Canadian company Cirque du Soleil has changed that. Changed it utterly by elevating — *le mot juste* — the arts of springing through the air to new heights.

Their current show, first seen here last winter and now on its final tour, also brings a strong-man act and two displays by contortionists whose bodies clearly do not have the sort of hinges the rest of us make do with. Elena Lev, an 18-year-old Russian dressed in shimmering grey-green, bends a leg round behind her back and over her head until the foot is touching the ground in front of her face, thus turning herself into a human @.

An act such as hers induces astonishment that the human frame can do such wonders. Trapeze work, high, high in the upper space of this great hall, makes one marvel at the nerve, confidence and mutual trust of the artistes setting off on a sequence of spinning somersaults that will climax in a diagonal dive through bars towards someone whose flying trapeze has just brought him to the one point in the air where it is possible to catch him. As if the feeling of vast space were not already overwhelming, the stage resembles the underneath of the Eiffel Tower, with rope ladders and steel wires taking the place of the curving legs.

Before the acts begin, some topheavy (and toppling) figures in sugar-icing mauves go trotting about the place and often reappear, doing nothing in particular. In general, the show takes longer than I expected in building up suspense and exciting applause time, but this may be dictated by practical needs, to allow the performers to recuperate.

Xavier Lamoureux in his white wig and vaguely 18th-century costume knots and unknots himself on his trapeze like someone in a Boucher painting doing fancy stuff with a swing: like all the artistes who are putting their bodies through such ordeals, he looks serene but surely his nerves are screaming. The serenity is one of the most striking features of this marvellous show, the suggestion of effortless achievement arrived at with a grace that smiles in the face of gravity.

Quaint costumes take us immediately into the land of the exotic, and the lighting shifts us that much further, into hallucination. When Paul Bowler is whirled aloft like a wingless angel to tumble inside a skeleton cube, the lights turn the spinning bars of his cage into flashes of red, green and blue, lingering on the retina for seconds afterwards.

The three mournful clowns are delightful, the husky singing of French *chansons* pleases the ear, and I just cannot get out of my mind the sight of the two 15-year-old Mongolians, writhing around one another like glimmering scorpions until each ends up sitting on his or her own head. I do not think I will try that one myself.

JEREMY KINGSTON



Clowning glory: Leonid Leikine in the stunning Cirque du Soleil spectacular

Snap, crackle, pop breakfast

RADIO

The BBC has been clever in marketing the *Today* programme as the breakfast show that sets the agenda for the day, but there is a lot more to early-morning radio than the upmarket and somewhat narrow agenda pursued at Radio 4. In audience terms, *Today* is a bowl of muesli compared with the full English fry-up that the commercial sector aims to deliver.

Hence the arrival, next Monday, of a new breakfast show from Talk Radio hosted by two established media men whose physical appearance suggests that they down the full English three times a day. David Banks, ex-*Mirror* Editor, and Nick Ferrari, ex-tabloid hack, may not have glamour on their side, but they have the journalistic credentials and the street savvy to help Talk to start punching its weight.

You are nowhere in radio without a breakfast audience. Nobody disputes that. When Chris Evans walked out of the Radio 1 breakfast show he took a substantial slice of the audience with him to his new and present home, Virgin (the station he liked so much that he bought it), where he increased the breakfast figures from 1.8 million to 2.6 million inside three months.

Humphrys-MacGregor-Naughtie may be the names on every lip among the media chattering classes, but *Today* is a unique broadcasting institution which will always be bigger than its personalities, therefore it has no real role in the battles that go on elsewhere. In the big bad world where radio stations have to make money, things are very different.

Evans, Terry Wogan at Radio 2 and Chris Tarrant at London's Capital Radio are the leading lights of breakfast radio. Tarrant more or less names his price (currently £1 million a year-plus) at Capital, which nearly bought Virgin before Evans arrived on the scene as a way of giving itself, and Tarrant, a national outlet.

If Banks and Ferrari are hardly in the tunes-and-traffic business, what exactly are they up to and who are they up against? The prime opposition must be Radio 5 Live, which changed its morning line-up a few months ago and now has a breakfast show presented by Victoria Derbyshire and Julian Worricker.

The Derbyshire-Worricker partnership works well but the gamble at Talk appears to be that there is a potential slice of the 5 Live audience that could be tempted away by the sort of acerbic, in-your-face approach promised by Banks-Ferrari, whose programme will feature everything from a five-minute editorial by Andrew Neil to three slots in each programme (on love, health and money) by Mystic Meg. So ... all human life is here.

Clearly the stakes are high in breakfast radio, mainly because that sector of the market is a delivery system: the point about the 6-9am slot is not so much how many people listen in, but how many stay with the station after 9am. Proportion is everything, therefore the more you have to start with the more you hold on to. That will be the writing on the studio wall when Banks and Ferrari get stuck in on Monday.

PETER BARNARD



Songs in the off-key of life

NEW MOVIES: James Christopher sees Michael Caine give the performance of his life and Jane Horrocks charm for England in the stunning *Little Voice*

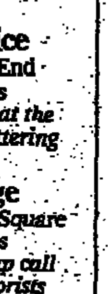
If cinema is the stuff of dreams, then **Little Voice** is a cruel warning that dreams only come true for the chosen few. Based on Jim Cartwright's 1992 theatrical smash, *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, Mark Herman's comedy exploits the grimy lives of Scarborough's down-at-heels whose only hope of escape is the lottery or showbiz stardom.

That Herman pulls this off with as much flair as his other notable Yorkshire success, *Brassed Off*, is largely due to Michael Caine's unsavoury Ray Say, a talent scout at the upper end of a negligible career. In a moment as telling as any biblical conversion, Say makes the first genuine discovery of his life while under the panting body of Brenda Blethyn's spectacularly vulgar fishwife, Mari. Grappling with her bulging tights, Say suddenly hears Mari's chronically shy daughter, LV, sing note-perfect impersonations of Shirley Bassey, Judy Garland and Marilyn Monroe. Amazed, Say raises his poached eyes to heaven and the big time. But however much he tries to put LV on the road to glory, by way of Mr Boo's nightclub, crippling stage fright — the inheritance of LV's ghastly family life — wrecks their chances.

Part fairytale, part musical comedy and teenage romance, *Little Voice* is a wonderfully grubby antidote to the *42nd Street* fantasy of the chorus girl who takes over the lead role for one night and walks off a star. Here the dash for stardom is simply dashed. But there are hefty compensations, not least Jane Horrocks's ability to turn LV's gawky waif into a torch-song diva.

Caine, however, steals the film. Cruising the streets of Scarborough in a bright red Chevy, gold medallion and a truly horrific collection of Hawaiian shirts, Caine, the Joe Bugner of Hollywood heavyweights, hasn't looked so perfectly in his element in years. Whether promoting saggy-breasted strippers or overweight male dance acts who wobble along to music, Say keeps you guessing as to how seriously he believes in the preposterous sense of his own glamour. Having carved a career from dreary, deadpan variations on villains and cockney chancers, Caine at last gets to make a flamboyant joke out of his own film persona.

However, Herman's seductive resolution lies outside the story of the ugly duckling who will never become a swan. LV does at least discover true love in the form of Ewan McGregor, whose rampant sex appeal is hidden under the unlikely guise of a British Telecom repairman who collects racing pigeons. Showing how handsomeness can be erased by an anorak, McGregor woos Horrocks in one of the least erotic love matches of our time. It is almost enough to turn anyone from fancying flesh to fancying pigeons.



Little Voice
Odeon West End
15, 96 mins
Sheer mischief at the expense of a glittering cast

The Siege
Odeon Leicester Square
15, 116 mins
Chilling wake-up call from Arab terrorists in New York

Psycho
Plaza, 15, 104 mins
Homage to Hitchcock backfires badly

Pi
Screen on the Green
15, 85 mins
Genius goes mad in Manhattan

Angel Dust
ICA, 116 mins
Japanese psycho thriller with bizarre twists

To Have and Have Not
Curzon Soho
PG, 100 mins
Lauren Bacall whistles, Bogey comes running

No matter that thematic subtlety and character development are nowhere in sight. The corny romance is compensated for by the glee with which Herman shoots his film. Like a saucy postcard gone haywire, the camera playfully zooms in on Mari's tight spangly tops, pans over steamed-up cars rocking on the harbour, and lingers on phallic stacks of plugs that spark wildly whenever a kettle is put on. But the real joy is the malicious amount of entertainment Herman extracts at the expense of his characters. That, and the finest performance of Caine's career.

The rest of this week's releases are awash with paranoia, none more chilling than Edward Zwick's **The Siege**. Here the FBI, the CIA and the American military trip over each other during an Arab bombing campaign that brings Manhattan to its knees. With the scars of the Gulf and the threat of terrorist reprisals on everyone's agenda, Zwick fingers a nerve as raw as any in mainstream cinema.



LV (Jane Horrocks), the singer blessed with genius but cursed with a dysfunctional family, sits surrounded by her influences in a scene from Mark Herman's poignant *Little Voice*

Does one have to become a monster in order to fight a monster? Zwick's glossy answer is yes and no. Denzel Washington's squeaky-clean Hubbard, head of the FBI Terrorism Task Force, tracks the suicidal Arab cells with the cool, old-fashioned rigour of a Hollywood homicide detective. Annette Bening's murky CIA agent smiles sweetly at Hubbard, but deploys her fading glamour to sleep with the enemy for information. And Bruce Willis's physically intimidating general tramples over both of them, wielding statistics and instilling panic wherever his cold blue eyes alight.

While these three scrap over who's in charge, there is palpable fear on the streets. Buses explode and cinemas are blown to bits. Despite the vicarious thrill of so much famous carnage, this is a deeply unsettling film. Roger Deakins's lush cinematography unfolds like a military offensive: swooping vistas of the Saudi desert, chopper views of New York skyscrapers, and tanks rumbling over Brooklyn Bridge. These are expensive ingredients to which Zwick brings a nauseous and horrifying sense of reality.

Against this backdrop, Washington delivers an impressive performance. Emotionally deadpan, politically astute, he absorbs one crisis after another, cementing his screen credibility while all about him are losing theirs.

The idea of remaking Hitchcock's 1960 classic **Psycho** poses a fascinating question: can one of the truly great fear movies be remade frame-by-frame? Having persuaded Universal of the integrity of his experiment, Gus Van Sant reshoots the film with all the imagination of a photocopier. Why did he bother? The grungy 1990s sensibility which he tries to impose makes the script seem dated, quaint and farcical. Colour merely highlights the poverty of the exercise. What was a motiveless attack on a naughty but nice middle-class American woman now seems seedy and routine. Worse, Hitchcock's delicious ironies are treated as jokes or simply flattened.

The actors model themselves on the original performers rather than the characters. Vince Vaughn's Norman Bates is a poor shadow of Anthony Perkins. Anne Heche's Marion is a downmarket model of Janet Leigh with neither the class or allure. Even the return of Bernard Herrmann's string orchestra giving it stick in the back seat of Marion's car as she is hounded to the Bates motel sounds sampled. By the time the knife plunges in, any lingering interest is well and truly butchered.

From one psycho to rather a lot. In David Aronofsky's **Pi** (rendered in the film's advertising as the symbol π), sinister investors and a Jewish sect doorstep a mathematical genius on the verge of discovering a 216-digit number that can predict the stockmarket and crack the Talmud's code for the true name of God. The Jews clearly have the better case. Who needs Wall Street when you can talk to the Almighty?

Despite the crude, twitchy cuts of this low-budget ($60,000) movie it communicates a real sense of excitement and adventure. Shooting in high-contrast black and white, Aronofsky plugs his film into the mathematician's nervous system. Unfortunately, being inside the head of Sean Gullette's haunted, fortysomething Max Cohen is not a nice place to be. Rattling around an apartment that looks like the guts of an old robot, Max is clearly on the point of insanity. His bizarre thoughts bubble up as if spoken underwater and eventually we are drowned by the sheer, relentless weight of them. This is *Rumble Fish* for Mensa students, and possibly a masterpiece in paranoia.

Sogo Ishii's Japanese melodrama **Angel Dust** features a gorgeous detective with the ability to slip her mind into that of the murderer. She has the unenviable task of nailing her former mentor and lover as a serial killer who injects poison into his female victims. This is a compelling psychological jigsaw puzzle, immaculately formal, conspicuously stylish, and it sports two nerve-shredding central performances by Kaho Minami as the detective and Takeshi Wakamatsu as the psychiatrist specialising in brainwashed patients.

There is a teasing tempo to this mental chess that is complemented by Ishii's surprisingly wry take on executive Tokyo. There are beautifully framed close-ups of silent commuters on over-crowded trains, icy executive disagreements in plush tower blocks, and the clinical business of the murders themselves. But you have to suspend something larger than disbelief to absorb Ishii's arsenal of bizarre twists and coincidences.

The reprint of Howard Hawks's 1944 classic **To Have and Have Not** still looks as reassuringly scratchy as ever. Here Humphrey Bogart's baggy-looking skipper of a tourist fishing boat bulldozes his way over various paranoid Vichy apparatchiks in Martinique and into the heart of Lauren Bacall's free-wheeling, glacial Slim. It's *Casablanca* all over again. But this time it's Bacall, with monstrous shoulder pads and a mouth as wide as the Riviera, who calls the shots in this legendary screen romance. They should slap a preservation order on this one: hands off, Mr Van Sant.

Carol Allen asks Mark Herman whether his *Little Voice* can match the success of *Brassed Off*

Tuned into the angels of the north

By his own admission the film-maker Mark Herman is "not a big fan of the theatre". But six years ago he went to see his friend Alison Steadman in *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, a new play by Jim Cartwright at the National Theatre. He was bowled over by it.

"What was magical was its theatricality — its enclosed nature, its heightened language and its reliance on Little Voice singing those songs, doing all those impressions of people like Judy Garland and Marilyn Monroe as a live performance. All the things which would make it difficult to turn into a screenplay.

"In fact I went with someone who was considering making it into a film. I said I'd hate to have that job. Then, 18 months ago, I was asked to make the film."

In the intervening years several attempts at writing the screenplay had been made. There was even talk of moving the story from northern England to America, with names such as Gwyneth Paltrow, Brad Pitt and Meryl Streep being bandied in the main roles.

Then came the success of *Trainspotting*, *The Full Monty* and Herman's own *Brassed Off*, and suddenly *Little Voice* in its original setting was looking feasible to the film's American backers. Herman set about writing a screenplay which dealt with the challenges he had spotted years earlier.

> 'I was determined to keep the mood of a live show'

Brenda Blethyn, now a name in America after her Oscar nomination for *Secrets and Lies*, was cast as Marie, Little Voice's blowsy, bullying monster of a mother. Ewan McGregor, with whom Herman had worked on *Brassed Off*, was offered the role of Billy, Little Voice's shy suitor, and Michael Caine said that he was interested in playing Ray, the sleazy promoter who sees a chance to revive his fortunes by exploiting Little Voice's talent. "He was desperate to do it," Herman says. "He saw a chance to do something that he cared about, like *Hannah and Her Sisters* and *Educating Rita*."

By now there was no question that Jane Horrocks would recreate on film the title role of Marie's inarticulate daughter, who expresses herself by imitating the legendary singers she was taught to love by her late father. Cartwright wrote the part with Horrocks's talents in mind, and Herman was determined to keep the feeling of live performance. "I wanted to get that immediacy I felt in the theatre," he says. "We haven't got some Judy Garland impressionist to put the voice on, which is what would have happened if we'd used another actress. The songs are all Horrocks's voice recorded as we filmed her on the set, which was a real nightclub in Scarborough."

ALAN WELLER



Herman: "I said I would hate to have to turn *Little Voice* into a film. Then, 18 months ago, I was asked to do that"

There are, Herman admits, similarities between *Little Voice* and his previous film *Brassed Off*. "They both make you laugh, make you cry and listen to a bit of music, but this has got a real fairytale strand which makes it very different. When we were looking for locations we went round Bolton, Rochdale, all those industrial towns like the one where the play is set. But there were too many echoes of brass bands and stripping steelworkers. So I set it in Scarborough. Also, by then we were thinking of Caine. Being Michael, he had to be a Londoner and I don't believe a London agent could exist in Rochdale. Nobody would believe it. But you can accept him in a seaside entertainment town."

Herman speaks with the authority of a native. A burly Yorkshireman who has retained his accent, he could pass for a farmer or indeed a businessman, big in bacon importing, like his father. Now 44, he was born in Bridlington, and worked for several years in the family business.

In his mid-twenties he decided bacon was not for him and used his talent for cartoon drawing to get a place at the local art school, moving from there to the National Film and Television school, initially to study animation. Looking at the competition there — one contemporary was Nick Park — he moved to live action and won a short film Oscar with his graduation film, *See You At Wembley, Frankie Walsh*.

He spent the next two years writing for the BBC and struck lucky with a song lyric for the Christians which became the hit *Ideal World*. Then his screenplay *Blame It on the Bellboy* was taken up by Disney. The film, a farce with Dudley Moore, flopped. Herman, by now married with children, had to sell his London house and move back north. Work was hard to find until he abandoned attempts to write "commercial" scripts and wrote something he cared about. The result was *Brassed Off*, and suddenly Herman was back in the game.

He is reluctant to say too much about his next project. "Whatever it is, I'll certainly be writing it, and it will be an original idea — but it won't feature music or be set in Yorkshire. If I make films much closer to home I'll be making them in my own street."

■ LISTINGS
Georgie Fame celebrates

ARTS

■ NEW CLASSICAL CDS
Elgar's Falstaff

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hargie

LONDON

KRAPP'S LAST TAPE: Edward Petherbridge's touring performance as Beckett's ancient sensualist replaying lost time. Also the rarely performed Breath — total playing time: 35 seconds.
Arts Theatre (0171-836 3334). Opens tonight, 8pm.

POULENC CENTENARY: The French composer's birthday is celebrated with a gala concert featuring a glittering array of musical entities. Felicity Lott, Ian Bostridge, the Nash Ensemble and others, perform the composer's works. Returns only.
Wigmore Hall (0171-935 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm.

SOUTH BANK JAZZ: While the Purcell Room continues to parade young classical musicians in its PLG series, the QEH plays hosts to a veteran of popular music. Celebrating 40 successful years in the business, Georgie Fame is joined in a concert by the *BBC Big Band directed by Steve Gray*.
Queen Elizabeth Hall (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 8pm.

ACE OF CLUBS: Noël Coward's *musical frivolity (songs include Sail Away* and *Something About a Sailor)* dating from 1949 and set in a seedy Soho night club.
Wimbledon Studio (0181-540 0362). Previews from tonight, 7.30pm.

THE GOLDEN COCKEREL: After several cancellations caused by flu, Gennadi Rozhdestvensky is now back on his feet and scheduled to conduct tonight's performance by the Royal Opera of Rimsky-Korsakov's sparkling fairytale cum political satire
Sadler's Wells (0171-713 6000) Tonight. 7pm

ELSEWHERE

MANCHESTER: Lawrence Foster conducts the **Hallé Orchestra** in an evening of mainly Spanish music. Top of the list are three pieces by Falla, followed by Salvador Brotons's Trombone Concerto, and a flute serenade by Montsalvatge. Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony concludes the programme.
Bridgewater Hall (0161-907 9000). Tonight, 7.30pm.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
■ House full, returns only ◪ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices

□ **COURT IN THE ACT:** 19th-century French farce by Hennequin and Veber catching the law with its trousers down.
Orange Tree (0181-940 3633).

◪ **THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE:** The D'Oyly Carte Company brings Gilbert and Sullivan's joyful adventures with pirates, policemen and a modern major-general to the West End.
Queens (0171-494 5041).

■ **THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA:** Tom Goodman-Hill and Dominic Rowan play the estranged friends in Edward Hall's pleasing RSC production.
Pit (0171-638 8891).

■ **CHICAGO:** Maria Friedman injects new blood into the hit revival of Kander and Ebb's musical about murder and fickle fame.
***Adelphi** (0171-344 0055).*

DICK BARTON SPECIAL AGENT: Journey back to the 1940s with the famous old radio thriller, brought to life by Phil Wilmott. Ted Craig directs.
Warehouse, Croydon (0181-680 4060).

□ **JESUS MY BOY:** Tom Conti in John Dowie's fitfully amusing comedy giving Joseph's side of the story.
Apollo (0171-494 5070).

◪ **PETER PAN:** Justin Salinger in the title role, with David Troughton as Captain Hook, in return of Fiona Laird's enjoyable production.
Olivier (0171-452 3000).

□ **THE SNOWMAN:** The much-loved Raymond Briggs characters soar over the audience in Bill Alexander's joyful production.
Peacock, WC2 (0171-863 8222).

□ **THE KING AND I:** Whistle a happy tune with Phil Wilmott's Steam Factory production of the feelgood Rodgers and Hammerstein musical.
BAC (0171-223 2223).

□ **ARABIAN NIGHTS:** Ali Baba, Sinbad and lesser known tales adapted and directed by Dominic Cooke for the Christmas show.
Young Vic (0171-928 6363).

□ **CINDERELLA:** Neil Bartlett and the Shockheaded Peter team stage a seriously wonderful version of Angela Carter's panto. Magic provided by Paul Kieve.
Lyric (0181-741 8701/2311).

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

Geoff Brown's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

THE ACID HOUSE (18): Three darkly comic tales of drugs, drink and hallucination by Irvine Welsh. An indigestible onslaught. With Stephen McCole, Ewen Bremner, and Kevin McKidd. Director, Paul McGuigan

***SITCOM** (18): A French bourgeois* family unbuttons itself. Mildly diverting lampoon, excellently acted ensemble cast. Director, François Ozon

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION (PG): Patrick Stewart's Enterprise crew come to the rescue of a peaceable race who have found the elixir of youth. Lightly likeable. *With Donna Murphy, F. Murray* Abraham. Director, Jonathan Frakes

CURRENT

ENEMY OF THE STATE (15): Will Smith's lawyer tumbles upon a political conspiracy. Exciting, fast-paced thriller, with Gene Hackman and Jon Voight.

THE MIGHTY (PG): Endearing tale of two outcast children, one hulking, one crippled, who pool their resources. Peter Chelsom directs.

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME (15): Robin Williams wades through the *afterlife trying to find his loved ones.* *Technically dazzling, but sabotaged* by a woolly script.

THE PRINCE OF EGYPT (U): Splendid animation, but there's not much for kiddies in the biblical story of Moses leading the Israelites to the promised land. Voice talents include Val Kilmer and Ralph Fiennes.

BABE: PIG IN THE CITY (U): Everyone's favourite talking pig faces the torments of the hostile city. Grotesque, misguided sequel to the hit film. With Magda Szubanski. Director, George Miller.

DANCING AT LUGHNASA (PG): Compressed and perfunctory version of Brian Friel's play about five spinster sisters in 1930s Donegal. With Meryl Streep, Catherine McCormack and Kathy Burke. Director, Pat O'Connor.

ON CONNAIT LA CHANSON (PG): Refined relationship comedy, with a marvellous cast and lip-synched snatches of popular songs. Alain Resnais directs Sabine Azéma, Pierre Arditi and André Dussollier.

TWILIGHT (15): Down-at-heel private eye (Paul Newman) is lured into a murder mystery. Inconsequential plot, but a wonderful cast. With Gene Hackman, Susan Sarandon, James Garner. *Director, Robert Benton.*

Monster without a punch

■ **GODZILLA**
Columbia TriStar, PG, 1998
THE budget was enormous. The hype was enormous. And the monster, offspring of genetic mutation, is scarcely a midget. It stomps through Manhattan, collapsing skyscrapers and sending debris flying: too big to have a personality or even any visual charm. Poor humans like Matthew Broderick's earnest scientist, Maria Pitillo's TV reporter and Jean Reno's *enigmatic Frenchman* fight the beast's onslaught with shallow dialogue. If you like being bludgeoned by movies, *Godzilla* will knock you flat, but if you prefer blockbusters to be fun, prepare for disappointment. At least when you rent the film on video you can lower the sound level — something impossible in the cinema.

■ **DREAM WITH THE FISHES**
Columbia TriStar, 18 1996
A BUTTONED-DOWN drip bent on *suicide joins forces with a wild heroin* addict who is a few weeks away from dying. Finn Taylor's giddy black comedy set around San Francisco pays spirited homage to America's subversive films of the early 1970s, and whisks us along with enough jaunty energy to keep the toes tapping. Real feelings are not neglected either. The engaging cast includes David Arquette, Brad Hunt and Kathryn Erbe. A rental release.

NEW VIDEO RELEASES

■ **FETISHES**
Blue Light, 18, 1996
DOCUMENTARY maverick Nick Broomfield wades into delicate territory in this funny, unsettling and educational peek into a sadomasochistic sex parlour in Manhattan. The spectacle gets a bit rough, although any revulsion at watching Wall Street brokers trussed up in rubber is wiped out by the sad thought that clients are driven to such extremes by unfulfilled emotional needs. Broomfield himself shifts ground during filming from being an uneasy observer of an alien world to a mildly sympathetic explorer of human peculiarities.

■ **MAD CITY**
Warner, 18, 1998
STORIES about media manipulation come ten a penny these days, so it is *just as well this trudge through familiar* territory features two big stars. John Travolta plays an ordinary Joe, a museum security guard thrust into the limelight when he accidentally shoots a colleague. Dustin Hoffman is the aggressive reporter who gets the whole country watching the affair on TV. Neither performance is subtle, but this is a film of broad effects, enjoyable as far as it goes, directed with an appropriate sweep by Costa-Gavras, the earnest director of *Z* and *Missing*. A rental release.

■ **THE PROPOSITION**
PolyGram, 12, 1998
ONE of last year's most risible films, featuring Kenneth Branagh in priest's robes and ginger hair, and William Hurt and Madeleine Stowe as a posh Boston couple in the 1930s who need a male surrogate to conceive a child. Hurt and Stowe put up a valiant fight trying to make impossible characters seem real, while Branagh just looks embarrassed. Rent it, and laugh.

GEOFF BROWN


Godzilla lays waste to Manhattan, and to all traces of subtlety, in the most unwisely hyped film of last year

NEW CLASSICAL CDS: Value-for-money Elgar; archive voices; and an historic reconstruction of a Bach Mass

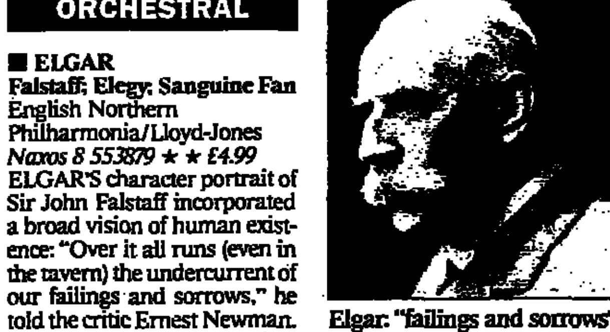
ORCHESTRAL

■ **ELGAR**
Falstaff; Elegy; Sanguine Fan
English Northern Philharmonia/Lloyd-Jones
Naxos 8 553879 ★ ★ £4.99
ELGAR'S character portrait of Sir John Falstaff incorporated a broad vision of human existence: "Over it all runs (even in the tavern) the undercurrent of our failings and sorrows," he told the critic Ernest Newman. A sensitive reading therefore needs to catch the underlying melancholy as well as the surface braggadoccio, and David Lloyd-Jones makes a fair attempt in this new version for Naxos. *There is certainly,* in the final pages, a sense of resignation after the vicissitudes of a disreputable life.

Perhaps a more generous recorded space would have put it all into better perspective but the English Northern Philharmonia generally emerges as victor over the wildly skittering passage-work it is given.

The various episodes are helpfully cued and at budget *price this is a very acceptable* issue, especially with the coupling of the moving Elegy and the engaging music from the ballet *The Sanguine Fan.*

BARRY MILLINGTON


Elgar: "failings and sorrows"

OPERA

■ **STARS OF ENGLISH OPERA**
Volume 4
Dutton CDLX 7030 ★ ★ £10.99
THE title is deliberately left open to interpretation. Only one of the operas here, *Semele*, is English and several of the items are sung in the original language. Quite a few of the "stars" were born abroad and came here to make their careers. But what's in a name? Dutton has once again raided the archives to find recordings of those who might have been heard with English companies *between the 1920s and the 1950s.*

Old Dutton favourites are back on display, led by two tenors expert in the art of the serenade: the liquid voice of Tano Ferendinos in Donizetti and Massenet and the robuster, more patrician Heddle Nash in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*. Nash also appears with Joan Hammond in Harlequin's serenade from *Pagliacci*. Neither sounds too comfortable in Leoncavallo. Nor will the Duca in *Rigoletto* be the role for which James Johnston will be best remembered.

Rarities are provided by Michael Langdon as the villain in Weber's *Euryanthe* and Otakar Kraus in Smetana's *Libuse*. Some of the mezzos sound too staid, but Gladys Ripley is in succulent voice with Dalila's Act I aria from Saint-Saëns's *Samson*, with Sir Malcom Sargent and the Liverpool Phil.

JOHN HIGGINS

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

CHORAL

■ **BACH**
Epiphany Mass
Gabrieli Consort/McCreesh
Archiv 457 631-2 (two CDs) ★ ★ ★ £20.99
ONE can almost smell the frankincense and myrrh rising from Paul McCreesh's latest virtuoso historic reconstruction: Bach's Mass for the Feast of the Epiphany, as it might have been celebrated in the Church of St Thomas in Leipzig, circa 1740.

In this recreation of the colourful mosaic of music which formed the Lutheran liturgy, not one tiny stone of authentici*ty has been left unturned.* The singers of the Gabrieli Consort and the period instruments of the Gabrieli Players are gathered in the wooden gallery around the organ; the congregational choirs of Freiberg and Dresden sing lustily below. And in two generous 80-minute discs, church bells ring out, gospels and epistles are intoned, fantasias, preludes and toccatas are played on two historic Saxon organs. And there is even a sermon — though only, I hasten to add, six of Martin Luther's customary 60 minutes.

All of this frames Bach's Missa Brevis in F, with McCreesh's fingerprints dancing unmistakably over the sprightly articulation of the Gloria; and the Cantatas BWV 65 and 10, buoyant in their instrumental textures and their chorals. The great event ends with both the organ prelude and the hymn *Von Himmel hoch* as a *magnificent finale.*

HILARY FINCH

★ *Worth hearing*
★ ★ *Worth considering*
★ ★ ★ *Worth buying*

■ VISUAL ART
Dalí in Liverpool

ARTS

■ TOMORROW
New pop albums reviewed

VISUAL ART: **John Russell Taylor** wonders if an impressive Liverpool show can restore the Surrealist to fashion

Will the real Dalí ever stand up?

At the moment Matisse is fashionable, De Chirico, despite valiant attempts to reinstate his later manner, unfashionable. And Salvador Dalí? Well, Dalí is a problem. Not exactly fashionable, but never actually dismissed from the story of major 20th-century art, he hangs in a sort of limbo — a limbo that is largely of his own making. *Salvador Dalí: A Mythology*, the big show at the Tate Gallery in Liverpool this month, attempts to define that limbo, and maybe, if possible, extract Dalí from it.

The problem is one with which our Post-Modern age has particular difficulty. One can hardly discuss Dalí without invoking the dreaded S-word, and how can we seriously consider Sincerity when so much of the art all round us is built quite deliberately of parody and pastiche?

There's no doubt that in the years since his death Dalí has become devalued because of all *the tales* mostly well authenticated) of his signing reams and reams of blank paper ready to receive the sort of pseudo-Dalí "original graphics" which multiply in one-in-a-lifetime-opportunity sales at Las Vegas hotels. Why did he do it? Just for money? Or as yet another outrageous gesture in a lifetime that was largely and regrettably devoted to self-publicity?

To work that out, one would have to probe Dalí's psyche, and to do that one has to feel that it is worthwhile. Clearly Fiona Bradley and Dawn Adès, curators of the new exhibition think it is. They have chosen to approach Dalí by way of one of his recurrent visual references, that arising from his preoccupation since childhood with Millet's endlessly popular painting *The Angelus*. For the details of how the obsession developed we are, of course, dependent largely on Dalí's own testimony, which may or may not be trustworthy.

An introductory room shows various things which he claims to have gone into the myth's evolution. These range from the coffee-set decorated entirely with reproductions of *The Angelus*, which once caught his eye in the window of a Catalan junk shop, to saucy postcards turning on a hat held very much as Millet's praying peasant is holding his — but, in the case of the postcard's bearded professor confronted with a pack of nubile schoolgirls while drying himself from a skinny-dip, held in such a way as to conceal a straining erection.

The sheer variety of these peripheral references suggests something of Dalí's catholicity of taste as well as his principled irreverence about the loftier reaches of art. In his own work the Millet image constantly recurs, now dominating a painting, now lurking, tiny, somewhere in the distance, now mixed with some other myth, such as that of Narcissus. One way that Dalí approaches *The Angelus* is to see it as a burial, much as Edwardian postcard publishers rechristened the picture "Burying Baby".

> ‘The word ‘sensible’ could never be applied to Dalí’

Another, on which he insisted more emphatically in later life, was to concentrate on what he claimed to see as a strong sexual subtext, which in its final form cast the peasant woman as a praying mantis, about to consume her husband after sex, and his gesture with the hat as primarily to protect his genitals. (A sensible Lancashire lady next to me drily observed to her friends that it was "too high for that".)

Obviously the word "sensible" could never be applied to Dalí, being as irrelevant to his art as "sincere". He was a showman, a show-off, an illusionist: he deliberately challenged his public to find him out, to discover where the divine madness ended and the commercial calculation began.

To an extent, nevertheless, it is possible to see Dalí as a serious person trying to find a personal language within the manifold paradoxes of Surrealism, and evolving a personal mythology as he goes. This does not necessarily have anything much to do with Millet: quite often, in fact, it seems more like Dalí's attempt to find his way to whatever reality is embodied in his dreams and visions.

The figure of "Gradiva", for instance, which frequently recurs in mysterious paintings such as *Girl with Curls* (1926), tries to make sense of an abstracted vision Dalí frequently had of a girl who was looking away from him so that he never saw her face but nevertheless sensed that she was an unknown goddess who would one day be fully revealed to him. (Of course he eventually decided that he was vouchsafed a mystic revelation of her identity when he first met his notorious dark muse, his wife Gala.)

Perhaps his preoccupation with *The Angelus* was the same sort of quest for illumination, perhaps not. Did it really mean a lot to him, or was the preoccupation merely a sort of personal Camp? Difficult to tell. If Congreve was right that affectation sufficiently persisted in becomes nature, then Dalí was surely starting at the wrong end: the visual references which seem fairly natural come earlier in the career, and the nearer we get to the publication of his absurd tome *The Tragic Myth of Millet's Angelus* in 1963, the more frantic, dragged-in and dragged-out it all appears. On this evidence, it looks as if Dalí may have to stay in his limbo for some time yet.

● Dalí *is at the Tate Gallery, Albert Dock, Liverpool (0151-709 0507) until Jan 31*

DALI MUSEUM, FLORIDA/DACS



Blues for the muse: the figure of "Gradiva" in *Girl with Curls*, painted in 1926, reappears in many of the artist's mysterious works

Meeting of like spirits

RECITALS

PLG Young Artists
Purcell Room

There is never any shortage of individual discoveries to be made as the Park Lane Group presents its annual showcase of young musicians and composers. But rarely does the art of creator and re-creator meet in a moment of real imaginative fusion.

Such a moment happened on Tuesday when the 22-year-old Edinburgh-born violinist Daniel Bell gave the premiere of two short pieces composed for him last year by Huw Watkins. Bell's intense playing and the energy of Watkins's *Coruscation* and *Reflection* were immediately and irresistibly engaging. The serrated rhythmic edges of the bold first piece, and the melancholy, lyrical unfolding of the second revealed imaginative daring and technical assurance in composer and performer.

Bell went on to give a bracingly fluent performance of Schoenberg's 1949 Fantasy before turning, with Watkins as pianist, to Elliott Carter's Duo for violin and piano. This really showed the stuff of which this remarkable young violinist is made. Toughness and refinement co-existed in a single-movement work of formidable complexity. Bell embodied its every shifting pattern. I can't wait to hear him again.

Bell and Watkins had shared the recital with harpist Catherine Beynon, and here too was something special. After palms, nails, knuckles, hands and feet had been put through the necessary repertoire of paces set up by Luciano Berio in his *Sequenza II*, Beynon gave the premiere of Martyn Harry's *Regenstimmen*. This evocation of "rain voices", inspired by childhood memories of rain beating on a roof, was commissioned by Beynon. The piece complemented the Berio by offering musical rather than virtuoso challenges in its hypnotic cross-etchings of rhythm and metre. And it confirmed Beynon as a harpist of particular finesse.

The regenerative force of the PLG's work throughout its history was felt earlier in the evening when the young Marais Ensemble, a flexible combination of wind quartet, quintet and piano, performed Judith Weir's *Airs from Another Planet*, commissioned by the Nash Ensemble, itself once featured by the PLG group. This winsome fantasy on traditional Scottish music marooned on Mars revealed the keen imagination of this ensemble, even if Ligeti's Ten Pieces for Wind Quintet challenged its finer points of ensemble.

HILARY FINCH

A ravishing view of King Mozart

OPERA: In Belgium **Hugh Canning** sees how David McVicar's *Idomeneo* has got better and better

With Mozart's first stage masterpiece, the opera seria *Idomeneo, King of Crete*, David McVicar scored a triumph for Scottish Opera on a shoestring: in 1995 he spent less than £10,000 on his own (minimal) set and strikingly handsome costume designs to create perhaps the most raptly beautiful piece of music-theatre the Glasgow-based company has given its audiences in the past ten years or more.

It was inevitable that McVicar would be invited to recreate it elsewhere and that has just happened at the Vlaamse Opera in Antwerp, where his new production has been greeted with rapturous acclaim by Belgian critics.

As a properly funded company — unlike Scottish Opera — the Flemings can afford a little more in the way of scenery, and this time McVicar has the luxury of a set designer in Michael Vale, whose visual aesthetic is no less simple and austere than McVicar's: where the Scottish *Idomeneo* took place on a platform and against backdrops of unrelieved black, here there is a modicum of Mediterranean warmth in a sandy-coloured, lozenge-shaped acting area whose robbed-off front corner juts out over the pit. The backdrop this time is a wall of plated steel, which parts horizontally to reveal a giant mask of Neptune encircled with flames when the sea-god's monster emerges from the brine to claim its victims.

McVicar is admirably sparing with scenic effects such as this: during the storm which seems to rise organically out of Electra's tempestuous first aria, *Tutte nel cor mi sento*, a rope descends from the flies and an acrobatic dancer writhes and wriggles like a sailor desperately struggling with the rigging of a ship. In Glasgow, the back-curtains parted to reveal the Cretan King and his navy pleading for divine aid in their tussle with the elements — an arresting image, albeit one which contradicted Mozart's instruction for Idomeneo's men to sing their cries off-stage. In Antwerp the dancer's rope-trick is scarcely less striking, evoking the astonishing turbulence of Mozart's music.

What I admire most about McVicar's work, particularly in the potentially stiff and formalised world of opera seria, is the tension he generates out of stasis. He rarely, if ever, undermines the genre by inventing distracting business to alleviate the supposed "boredom" factor of one singer delivering a long *da capo* aria to another without theatrics.

What he does do, however, is direct his singers to extract every ounce of pathos and feeling with a body-language and delivery of the text that can be dramatically riveting. As in Scotland, the great emotional confrontations between the Ilia and Idamante, Idomeneo and the son whose life he has compromised with his rash oath to Neptune, and Elettra's with her own tortured ego, bristle with high drama. Equally, McVicar can create the most beautiful scenic effects with the simplest of means: the ambience for Ilia's Act III "garden" aria is evoked with a show of rose petals. Ravishing!

Where he departs most radically from his Scottish *Idomeneo* is in the musical edition. Where in Glasgow Nicholas McGegan opted for Mozart's Vienna revision of 1786 with the castrato role of Idamante transposed and adapted for tenor, the Flemish Opera's (soon to be ex) music director, Marc Minkowski, favours the 1781 Munich original. He makes cuts sanctioned by Mozart — Idamante's *No, la morte io non pavento* ("No, I fear not death") and Idomeneo's valedictory *Torna la Pace* ("Let peace return") are the chief casualties — but otherwise this is an unusually full text incorporating not only the magnificent longer version of Elettra's hair-raising *O smanie, o furie* ("Oh, torments, oh furies") but the complete concluding ballet.

Minkowski conducts the modern instrument Flanders Opera orchestra with an Eliot Gardiner-like elan, although he indulges occasionally in Harnoncourtesque extremes of tempo and mannered "expressive" rubatos which sound alien to Mozart.

It has to be conceded, however, that Elettra's two bad-hair scenes — dazzlingly sung by the Canadian soprano Lyne Fortin — were thrilling. Indeed, from the vocal point of view this was an *Idomeneo* which would not have seemed out of place at Glyndebourne: Veronica Cangemi is a small-scale but unerringly musical *Ilia*, while Hanne Fischer, deputising at very short notice for the indisposed Magdalena Kozena, sang Idamante's not always rewarding music quite beautifully and their voices blended exquisitely in their duet and the great quartet. Both singers have Glyndebourne experience behind them, as does Richard Croft, an unusually youthful and lyrical Idomeneo who sang the daunting coloratura of the long version of *Fuor del mar* ("Saved from the sea") without batting an eyelid. The baritone Russell Smythe effortlessly encompassed the tenor range and florid writing of Arbace's part. With an outstanding High Priest in the celebrated Flemish Bach evangelist, Guy de Mey, and a terrific young French bass, Nicolas Testé, as the Voice of Neptune, this was an *Idomeneo* cast without weaknesses. I recommend catching McVicar's beautiful staging when it transfers to the opera house in Ghent — a short hop on Eurostar via Lille — this month. There are more performances on January 10, 12, 14, 16.



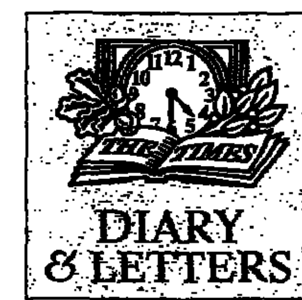
Cretan and spartan: David McVicar's production of *Idomeneo* in Antwerp retains its simple and austere aesthetic

BOOKS

Supernatural charm for animal spirits

BRENDA MADDOX comes up with a fascinating thesis in *her forthcoming book on the* poet W. B. Yeats, *George's Ghosts* (Picador). She thinks that the automatic writing *dictated by the spirits to* Yeats's wife George, who was a medium, was in fact a ruse on her part — conscious or unconscious — to get Yeats into bed with her at the right time to produce a child. "If you interpret the mystic instructions carefully," Maddox tells us, "they read just like Marie Stopes." Anyway, Yeats got some wonderful metaphors from the spirits, George got her child, and the marriage — which had been in danger — was saved.

Is a new collector's item coming on to the market? Several publishers, including Pan, Penguin and Hodder, have been sending out proof copies of a selection of their 1999 books nicely boxed up in specially printed cases. Other recent attempts to persuade literary editors and booksellers to look at advance proofs include a special binding for the proof copy itself — as when Cape sent out proofs of Julian Barnes's French short stories, Cross Channel, *done up to look like a Gallimard paperback. All very well — provided the publishers make sure they correct the proofs carefully too.*



A DAGGER will be thrust through the heart of an historical crime writer in March. But it will not draw blood, for this is the Ellis Peters Historical Dagger, a new award recently created by the Crime Writers' Association in honour of Peters, the inventor of monkish crimes and mysteries. Crime stories set at any time up to 1965 are eligible.

Is this to be the year of the potato? The spud has not been much celebrated in literature, though Kipling in one of his* Barrack-Room Ballads *has a soldier who says his mouth is like a rotten potato. But 1999 will see both a learned history of the neglected vegetable,* The Potato *by Larry Zuckerman (Macmillan), and a powerful defence of it,* Potatoes Not Prozac, *by Kathleen DesMaisons (Simon & Schuster).

OR is 1999 to be the year of the pig? A history of this virtuous animal, including everything from its image to its squeal, *Think Pig* by Robert Malcolmson and Stephanos Mastoris, is due shortly from the Hambledon Press. The publisher's publicity observes that it is "the ideal present to give to ex-husbands".

THIS SATURDAY IN metro

In his own words: Whitbread shortlisted novelist, Ronan Bennett, talks about his experiences as a teenager, his wrongful conviction for the murder of a policeman, his time inside Long Kesh prison and his book, *the catastrophist.*

ALSO: Harry Ritchie reviews John Burnham Schwartz's hit-and-run drama, *Reservation Road*; Marcel Berlins on *Every Dead Thing*, "the most terrifying read since *The Silence of the Lambs*"; and take number two as Don DeLillo's *Underworld* and Hanif Kureishi's *Intimacy* appear in paperback



Jenkins is a cautious guide on her grand tour of physical culture. She avoids the seamy worlds of drugs and stripping, preferring instead the beaten path of tattoos and body piercing

Just a taste of transgression

SARAH DUNANT

TONGUE FIRST
Adventures in Physical Culture
By Emily Jenkins
Virago, £9.99
ISBN 1 86049 631 8



There is much less to this book than meets the eye. Having said that you can see how it began — a seductive little proposal on an American editor's desk: young hip journo from New York walks the wild side of modern culture (sex, drugs, therapy, body decoration) and sends back witty postcards from the edge. A travel book of the senses for the Bridget Jones generation. Irresistible. Sure to be instant cult stuff.

Alas, many a slip between proposal and realisation. The title doesn't help — *Tongue First: Adventures in Physical Culture*. It's obviously meant *to sound sexy. Slipping that* lithe, muscular little organ into all manner of naughty places: strip joints, tattoo parlours, bags of heroin, health farms, isolation tanks, designer dress stores and an appointment with an acupuncturist. Spot the first deliberate mistake. Jenkins doesn't know the difference between cultural transgression and late 20th-century lifestyle. Now, that in itself could make an interesting thesis: *decadence as an everyday appendage of consumer* society, but Emily Jenkins is not the right chronicler for that. *She* is too much a victim of the disease to be its analyst.

What is remarkable about her book is the way she makes everything, from her first snort of heroin to shopping in a charity shop, equally unilluminating. This is because she is more intent on observing than experiencing. It is as if she had continually got the *pen in her hand. Even as the* heroin hits her brain she's looking for a way to equate Coleridge with the street junkie. She continually elevates the banal to the profound. So in a chapter about body decoration she makes observations like: "By wearing make-up a person goes into dialogue with commonly held ideas about femininity. In painting my face I actively bring myself in line with the convention of what a woman is, here and now." To which the response of the average intelligent reader is: "Well, yes, Emily. So? And?" The trouble is the "So?" or the "And?" never comes.

Part of the reason is that she is just not a good enough writer. Teasing genuine meaning out of popular culture is the equivalent of breeding lilacs out of the dead land. It may look easy enough but it takes a hell of a life force to achieve it. And for all her apparent courage, life force is not Jenkins's strong point. As a self-appointed guide through physical culture she turns out to be disarm*ingly wimpish. She tries hero*in, but only once and not enough seriously to lose it. She stays up for nights on end to experience the sensory deprivations of sleeplessness, but then invites her boyfriend round and falls asleep in his arms.

Admittedly she has a tattoo, but hers is tasteful. Shaving her hair off is as transgressive *as she gets*, and when it comes to walking anywhere near her own wild side she is decidedly prissy. She talks about stripping and sex for money, but she never tries it. She is uncomfortable with anyone touching her body during massage and when confronted with the suggestion of colonic irrigation her response is: "I should say up front that I'm not going to get a tube stuck up my ass for the sake of literature." For a book which claims to flirt with the excesses of physical culture, this is like leaving base camp in the Himalayas with a guide who turns out to be scared of heights.

I'm aware this is a cruel review. And as any reviewer will admit, it is much easier to burn a book than to praise it. So let me end by saying that the faults of this book are perhaps less to do with Emily Jenkins herself than with the world that she seeks to analyse. It doesn't take a moralist to observe that we are living in a culture where it is hard to tell indulgence from enlightenment on your credit card bill and where sensation is regularly mistaken for feeling. It is a treacherous terrain for the writer. Maybe if Jenkins had travelled without her pen and her contract she might have found the journey both more frightening and rewarding. But then what would she have done with the book proposal?

The never-ending story

JEANETTE WINTERSON

COLLECTED FICTIONS
By Jorge Luis Borges
Allen Lane, £20
ISBN 0 713 99269 7



Borges called his style Baroque, defined as that which "deliberately exhausts (or tries to exhaust) its own possibilities". For Borges, Baroque is not a term of abuse — as it usually is when applied to architecture — it is a last paragraph. It is the final stage of all art, the point where "art flaunts and squanders its resources".

Borges was 55 when he wrote that. He was halfway *through the century and the* century was halfway through itself. As a point in time, the view in any direction was not good; war behind and Cold War present and ahead. As a point in time for Borges it was the usual question mark — and *all his stories are question* marks, this time applied with extra force. The force was his own work. He was writing an introduction to his early fictions, written in the 1930s.

For any writer, this would be a moment of self-doubt, but place it midway through a century of self-doubt, and the result is likely to be a reaching towards some sort of end-time. Borges's "final stage of art" is exactly the cultural pessimism that Susan Sontag argued *against in her 1965 essay, One Culture and the New Sensibility*. The argument is not over. There are plenty of people who talk about the death throes of art, though unlike Borges, most of them have never created anything in their own right.

I don't want to criticise Borges; there is no point in that. I would rather learn from him, the way one can learn from good writers: by understanding them in their context and recognising that they will always write outside their context. Everyone has to live in their own time, but artists live too in their imagination, and this is a force as profound and decisive as the context of their lives. Out of the tension between context and imagination is formed the work.

Borges's work does not end. It begins. His best-known piece, *The Garden of the Forking Paths* (1944), uses the simple plot of a Chinese man, working as a German spy, es*caping from his pursuer*. He comes to the house of an eminent Sinologist who reveals to him the lost labyrinth of one of *his own ancestors. The labyrinth*, and the book that accompanies it, do and do not exist, just as the present does and does not exist. The brutal ending of the story, an event in time, if ever there was one, does not contradict the strangeness of what has been offered. It reads as a whim, a way out that is not an end but the visible tail of a forking path.

Time is the big discovery of the 20th century. From Einstein to Stephen Hawking we have become fascinated by it. We know now that time is not just a measure, *it is a player*, though what kind of player we do not know. Borges's fictions juggle with the possibilites of time: movement across it, *doppelgangers*, memory loops, the effects of time on time itself. Some pieces, such as *A Weary Man's Utopia* are time-travel explorations out of the mould of H. G. Wells. Others, like *Borges and I* or *The Encounter* open up spaces for later writers — one thinks particularly of Georges Perec and Italo Calvino. *The Garden of the Forking Paths* is the basis for Calvino's *If on a Winter's Night a Traveller* (1979), a novel that begins itself over and over again and at its end is consumed by its own metaphors.

If Borges avoids endings, and he does, it is because as a writer he is suspicious of anything so neat. The untidyness of his work is a clue to its potential. Even the shortest pieces, less than a page, refuse the satisfaction of something finished. His story, *August 25th 1983*, is a *dialogue* with his own separate, bad-tempered self, scrapping over work done and not done, admitting that it *is all* a failure but taking a healthy side-swipe at the vanity and terror of wanting to produce "a masterpiece".

Borges's masterpiece is the whole work, his life's work, read together, separate and complete, like his beloved *Thousand and One Nights*.

This volume of collected fiction, published to celebrate the centenary of Borges's birth in 1899, is a good thing and a bad thing. Good because the fictions can be read and compared one against the other; bad because the gaps of time have been closed up so that the reader is tempted *to run on* where he or she should pause. It is a pity that we cannot *have* a boxed set of the individual *volumes, sometimes as much* as 11 years apart.

Andrew Hurley's translations read well and the look of the book is pleasing. Some of the earliest stories seem redundant now, perhaps because they were really sketches for the wonderful things written later, or perhaps because, if it's finale pirates that interest you, you will want Kathy Acker, not Borges. And yet, Acker loved Borges's work and no doubt found space for herself there in the simultaneity of time that writers make for one another. It is no surprise that *The Garden of the Forking Paths* should have been published in the same year as T. S. Eliot's collected *Four Quartets*. Eliot's meditation on time sits beside Borges's vertical assault on it; but both contain the same truth: that there is no end, only a series of beginnings.

Borges the writer knew what Borges the man sometimes forgot — there is no last paragraph, no final stage. In a late story, published in the 1980s, *Paracelsus*, old and despised and alone, takes the ashes of a rose thrown into the fire by a doubting disciple and pouring "the delicate fistful of ashes from one hand into the concave other, he whispered a single word. The rose appeared again."

BOOKS

IN SHORT

Change over to Euros

BOTH SIDES OF THE COIN
By Christopher Huhne & James Forder
Profile Books, £8.99, €13
ISBN 1 86197 107 9

IN the best hair-splitting economic and political argument since the Corn Laws, James Forder presents the arguments against the euro and European Monetary Union while Christopher Huhne speaks up for them. The debate is more lucid than usual, but no more illuminating. On one point Tweedledum and Tweedledee do agree: fast-paced change is very unnerving for the English who prefer to walk slowly up to their necks in deep waters rather than take a sudden plunge.

Terrible war

VICTORY 1918
By Alan Palmer
Weidenfeld, £25
ISBN 0 297 84124 6

THE Great War was a world war fought on three continents and many seas, and this outstanding history moves the British viewpoint from the middle distance of France and Flanders to encompass the broader strategic vision of neglected campaigns in the Balkans, Iraq, Palestine and Eastern Europe fought by many Allied forces. Palmer's style is as good as his judgment is daring. His book is a detailed and dramatic overview of the First World War that, 80 years on, has become conventionalised in our national memory.

Curtain up

GRACE, BEAUTY & BANJOS
By Michael Kilgarriff
Oberon Books, £19.95
ISBN 1 84002 008 3

SUBTITLED "Peculiar Lives and Strange Times of Music Hall and Variety Artistes", this biographical dictionary is quirky in tone. The flicker of one-line or two-step turns that sparked briefly to life before falling off the stage into drink and despair is noted in an arch authorial voice that drops the curtain on his subjects like a panic-stricken stage-manager who realises that tonight's star bill is not only barely adequate but more than usually drunk. A reference book for aficionados of the tasteless, the tacky and the untalented.

Waltz along

RICHARD STRAUSS
By Michael Kennedy
Cambridge, £25
ISBN 0 521 58173 7

KENNEDY delivers a biography of Strauss that draws upon neglected first-hand source materials and analyses the crucial elements of the composer's life — his successful marriage, his long-standing collaborations with librettists von Hofmannstahl, Zweig, Gregor and Krauss, and the compromises Strauss made with the Third Reich. Lacking only a close critical analysis of the music, which Kennedy considers to have been well rehearsed elsewhere, this is a lively *Life* that redresses some balances in previous biographical excursions.

IAIN FINLAYSON

Strange clothes but an emperor of tales

Peter Ackroyd is intrigued by the queer life of fable-spinner Hans Christian Andersen

The life of Hans Christian Andersen is rich in inadvertent humour. Never, perhaps, has so bizarre a figure crossed the stage of world literature. He was awkward, gangly and prone to hysterics. He was very plain and wore "grotesque" clothes, with a hat like an umbrella. He was also vain and self-obsessed in a most peculiar and theatrical way; when he was not bathed in tears, he was sending busts of himself all over Europe.

Charles Dickens once described him as a "bony Danish bore". He seems always to have been ill at ease, with a habit of saying the wrong thing or arriving at the wrong moment. He was recorded as being "simple and child-like, and simpletonish in his manner". Yet from this apparently absurd person issued some of the most wonderful stories in the world.

How did it all begin? It began as a fairy story. Ostensibly he was the son of a lowly shoemaker and washerwoman in a small Danish town, yet Alison Prince seems to agree with other students of Andersen's life that he was in fact of royal birth — an illegitimate child who was foisted upon two peasants who happened also to be royal servants. There is no clear evidence to support this, except for the writer's astonishingly easy access to the royal court and his equally unusual self-belief evinced in such stories as *The Ugly Duckling*.

As a child he was shy and precocious in equal measure. He hid behind curtains to knit clothes for the dolls in his toy theatre; yet on other occasions he would recite his verse to anyone within earshot, a habit which he continued all his life to the consternation or amusement of all those who fell in his way. At the age of 15 he travelled to Copenhagen in order to become an actor, where he met with rebuffs which would have destroyed a less singular and single-minded person.

He was plainly desperate for affection and admiration, and his compatriots did their best to assist him. He went scrounging for meals like a stray cat, to use Alison Prince's admirable simile, a habit he never entirely lost in the days of wealth and fame. Even in these early years he was inordinately and almost comically ambitious, turning up unexpectedly on the doorsteps of any likely patron or theatrical manager. More often than not they invited him in: like many ambitious people, he was lucky with his timing.

As an actor, he preferred his own scripts. His poetry was published in the newspapers, and his plays performed for two or three nights, but his initial exuberance was generally followed by dissatisfaction. His standards were, after all, very high: "Praise, infinite praise, as I have said so often, will have the most beneficial effect on me."

He felt himself to be homeless in his own country, so everywhere



Peter Ackroyd

else became his home. He travelled all his life, and yet he remained a bad traveller; in Italy, and Germany, and England, he complained of toothache and cold lodgings. He took young male companions with him, who soon tired of him and left him once more in tears. This raises the question of his homosexuality, which emerges in this biography on more than one occasion. And as so often happens in connection with sentimental 19th-century men, the evidence is ambiguous.

He could only love women at a distance. It is not at all clear, however, that his attachments to men progressed beyond romantic camaraderie; he was perhaps too wilting a creature to adopt a more active role. In fact he was much more assiduous in his courtship of noble families. On those occasions, in Prince's words, "he moved in for the kill with steely determination". He combined self-pity with self-promotion, but he was honest about his ambition: "I covet honour and glory in the same way as the miser covets gold: both are probably empty, but one has to have something to strive for in this world, otherwise one would collapse and rot."

This astonishing individual is well served by this biography. Alison Prince has an instinctive sympathy for her subject, without remaining unaware of his comic potential. And despite an occasional propensity for cliché, her narrative brings him into the light.

Then, there are the famous fairy tales — among them *The Princess and the Pea, The Emperor's New Clothes, The Ugly Duckling, The Little Mermaid* and *The Red Shoes*. The first collection emerged almost by accident in an unbound booklet. They were received with "baffled silence" but slowly their audience and reputation grew.

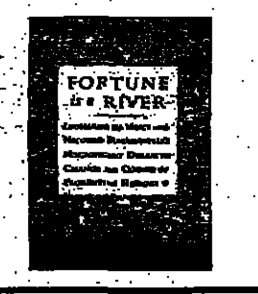
The strange paradox of these pure narratives, into which one may gaze and gaze without being able to gauge their depth, written by this awkwardly ambitious Danish ex-actor cannot perhaps be resolved. Yet there may be a clue in a contemporary's remark that he possessed "a brooding quality of strange spirituality". In that sense his bizarre behaviour needs no other explanation: it seems that he was aware of his great destiny, and somehow floundered towards it. The strange doom of the storyteller always lingered about him — if he was a fool he was a holy fool, who spoke the truth without necessarily realising that he had done so.

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN
The Fan Dancer
By Alison Prince
Allison & Busby, £19.99
ISBN 0 7490 0346 4

Hey Leo, meet Nick

Lisa Jardine debunks the fantasy of a friendship that never was

FORTUNE IS A RIVER
By Roger D. Masters
Simon & Schuster, £17.99
ISBN 0 684 84452 4

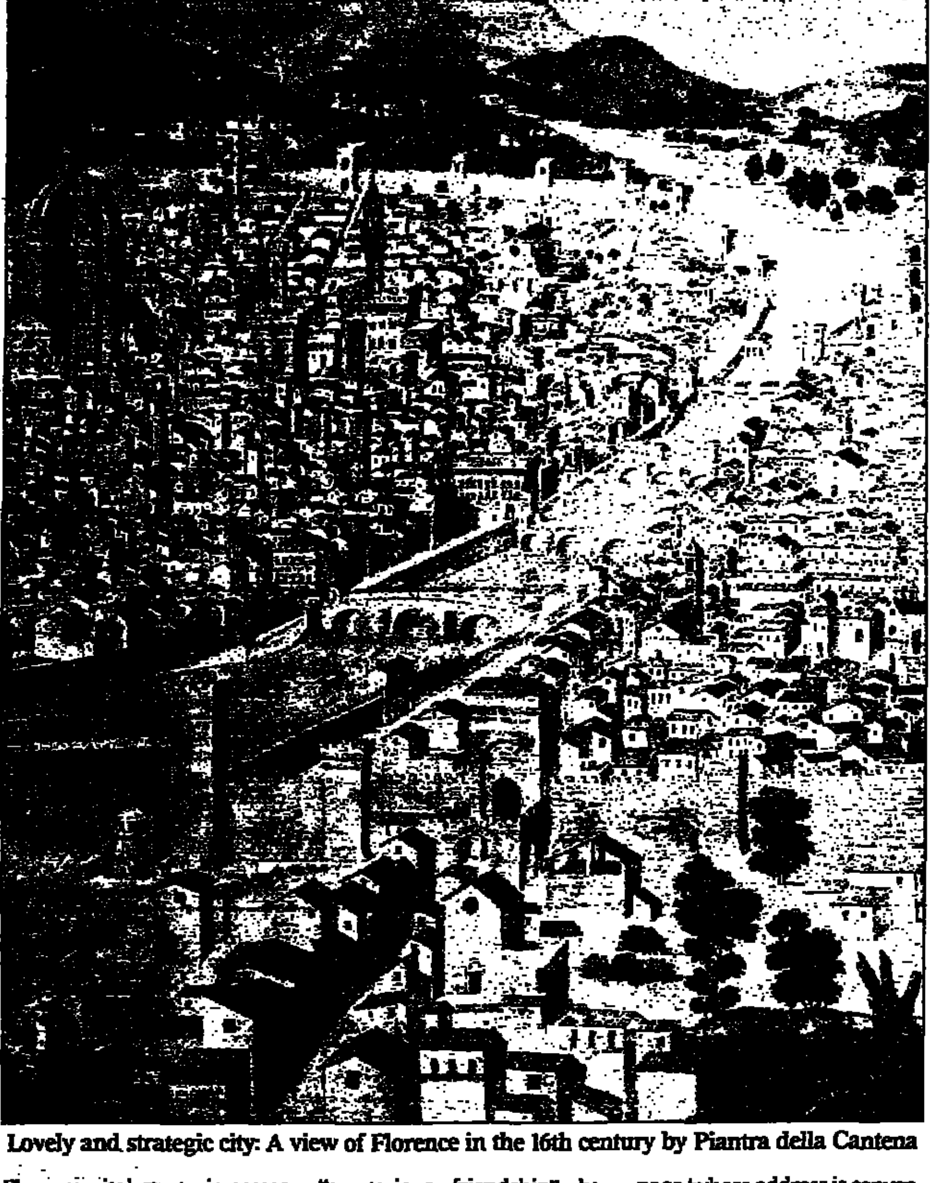


This is a widely researched and well-illustrated book which brings together material largely unfamiliar to the general reader, concerning politics, diplomacy and technology in and around Florence at the beginning of the 16th century. Leonardo da Vinci is revealed to have made measured surveying drawings of Italian locations like the island of Imola and the Arno valley as exquisite as the background landscape to his *Mona Lisa* or *Virgin on the Rocks*: Machiavelli is discovered to have written as animatedly about engineering initiatives vital for military purposes as he did vividly in *The Prince* about the political tactics needed to hold on to power in an unstable state.

This is also the kind of book which gives the writing of popular history a thoroughly bad name. There is no evidence that Leonardo and Machiavelli ever actually met. There is good documentary material connecting both men with the failed engineering project to divert the course of the River Arno, initiated by the government of Florence in 1503-4; Machiavelli was Florentine emissary to Cesare Borgia while Leonardo was in Borgia's employment as an engineer in 1502. Tantalisingly, however, nothing survives to tell us that the two were ever even in the same room together. Which makes Roger Masters's *Fortune is a River* — "a fascinating reconstruction of a unique friendship" — infuriating, teetering somewhere between history and fantasy.

Actually, to be fair, it is hard to find a sentence in *Fortune is a River* where the circumspect author himself goes so far as to say that his two protagonists ever had anything to do with one another. In the chapter called "The Meeting", Masters contrives only to say that the two were both in Imola at around the same time in 1502 — Leonardo surveying the island for Cesare Borgia, Machiavelli on a Florentine diplomatic mission. In the chapter called "The Collaboration Begins" he suggests only that Leonardo was hired by the Florentine government to work on surveying projects, and proposes that this is "hard to explain without assuming that Niccolo was already closely acquainted with the Borgia's former architect and general engineer". The grander claims, however, are plainly there in the chapter titles.

The jacket blurb goes a step further: there we find the claim boldly made that Leonardo and Machiavelli "formed a friendship", one between "two of history's great geniuses", and that "astonishingly, during the rich first decade of the 16th century, the pair joined together under the inspiration of one of Leonardo's most fantastic dreams" to build a system of canals which would give



BRIDGEMAN

Lovely and strategic city: A view of Florence in the 16th century by Piantra della Cantena

Florence vital strategic access to the sea. The result of such carefully judged overstatement is thoroughly irritating. Masters claims relatively little, and offers us a rather unexceptionable account of late Renaissance Italy. The publisher then "spins" this into a hold-your-breath piece of excitement, revealing a hitherto unknown historical story . . . though not, as it happens, a true one.

Roger Masters is a Professor of Government. He has his own agenda for fondly hoping his protagonists once met and shared their thoughts together. He wants to believe in what he dubs the "mysterious friendship" between Leonardo and Machiavelli in order to argue that an intellectual collaboration between these two produced an importantly modern "science of power" long before Locke and the Age of Enlightenment. As a result of the Arno project, he suggests, Leonardo and Machiavelli came to understand together that, in the modern state, power depends on mastering the combined forces of new technology and a rational science of nature. This is a lesson, Masters argues, which we urgently need to learn today, in our present technologically driven times. He who controls the forces of technology controls the world. As Masters writes on his personal web-page (whose address is conveniently given at the end of his book): "our civilisation faces a disaster unless we abandon the ideologies of left and right, returning to the more realistic, tough-minded assessment of human nature and history" developed by Machiavelli and Leonardo.

Every historian knows that you cannot afford to make up your historical data, or stretch credulity in the connections you make. General readers love history and biography precisely because they can count on them as "real". To avoid confusion I suggest Masters retitles his book, in the currently fashionable manner, as the fiction it is — *Fortune is a River: A Novel*.

A haunting for happiness

BEL MOONEY

SUFFRAGETTE CITY
By Kate Muir
Macmillan, £12.99
ISBN 0 333 74167 6



I wonder if this is the first millennium novel of the year? It won't be the last, that's for sure. In truth, the heading of the first chapter of *Suffragette City*, informing us that we are in August 1999, sets up a chain of expectations that are never quite fulfilled. The historical moment comes and goes in the narrative with little dramatic effect. No matter. Kate Muir has produced a novel which is consistently entertaining in addition to being well-constructed and stars a satisfyingly feisty heroine.

Albertine Andrews is an artist who likes to wander about with a padded stomach, to monitor the effect of pregnant women on passers-by in preparation for her series of pictures, *Confinement*. As always, *fin de siècle* Manhattan is stuffed with weirdos, wannabes, and wacky fashionable people. The city is hot and Albertine's existence has slumped to a halt in exhaustion: "I felt my life had truly bottomed out. I was right in the U-bend: my work stank, my room-mates stank, and I hadn't had sex for 187 days."

But things are about to change big time. First Albertine encounters a mysterious 30-something man wearing an eyepatch, who offers to help her with the laundry. Then Granny Rose brings along a trunk of letters that belonged to Albertine's great-great-grandmother Agnes McPhail — who (at the turn of the last century) was the 19-year-old wife of a dour Glaswegian preacher. During the night Albertine senses a presence in her room, reads the first of Agnes's letters . . . and a haunting begins, marking changes in work, fortune and love of which our heroine could not have dreamt.

How the letters lead Albertine to know long-dead Agnes in her metamorphosis from timid wife to powerful suffragette, how her ghost becomes more and more irritating and corporeal, and how Albertine's frustrating love affair with the elusive Leonardo progresses despite Agnes's warnings make for a narrative which keeps you reading avidly until the last page. Muir's style is slick and witty, and 19th-century Glasgow is drawn with as much skill as the Big Apple, suspiciously wormy at the centre.

Deceptively light, this novel has a serious side. Maybe, in creating Albertine and Agnes, Kate Muir has drawn on twin aspects of her own personality, so that the wit, froth, and cynicism of modern journalism are tempered by an old-fashioned moral sense of what life is really about: *family*. Albertine's room-mate adopts a Chinese girl; Albertine gets pregnant and decides to keep the baby; Leonardo, despite the odds, is there; and we get a happy ending as deeply rooted in convention as it is possible to be. If this is the author's recipe for happiness in the next millennium it's fine by me.

Then bid adieu to your wife, as well

ROGER SCRUTON

ALL IN THE MIND
A Farewell to God
By Ludovic Kennedy
Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99
ISBN 0 340 68063 6



Waiting, as he puts it, in life's departure lounge, the 80-year-old Ludovic Kennedy has taken the opportunity to explain why he expects nothing after take-off. His book is a sincere and well-informed defence of atheism, which argues first, that God is a fiction, and secondly that it is better for us not to believe in him.

Kennedy is an optimist. He sees the decline in religious faith not as a moral or political disaster, but on the contrary as a sign of maturity, an opening of the collective mind to the truth of our condition, from which, with the aid of science, we can begin to repair our planet and lay the foundations for the happiness and freedom that centuries of superstition have curtailed.

In a nutshell Kennedy's thesis is this: "God" is no more than an idea in the human mind and denotes no reality, whether immanent or transcendental. Science — notably the theory of evolution — flies in the face of those "revealed truths" which are the jealously guarded heritage of the Christian churches. Moreover, in its attempt to protect its doctrine, Christianity has had recourse to cruelty, and oppression on such a scale as to undermine its moral credibility.

For someone brought up since the war, among village atheists wedded to more or less vulgarised versions of those ideas, the first response is, I confess, a cavernous yawn. But Kennedy has the knack of awakening the critical spirit in his reader, and I found myself searching, after a while, for what I would imagine to be the Christian answer to his accusations. Here is my suggestion: "God" is certainly an idea in the mind. If you gave a complete scientific description of the world and all that is contained in it, God would not be mentioned. But if you gave a complete scientific description of your wife, detailing all the joints and vessels and neurones, she too would not be mentioned. That thing — the subject of consciousness — which is targeted in dialogue, has no place in the science of human life. So does your wife exist? Or is she only an idea in your mind? (And what does the word "only" mean in such a context?)

It is true that science has discredited the biblical story of the creation, if you take that story to be a literal truth, but has it been able to account for the fundamental fact, compressed in that story into a wonderful image, and fully confirmed by all the crimes which Kennedy goes on to document — the fact of original sin, and the seemingly inexorable connection between the extent of human knowledge and the extent of human wrong-doing? God moves in a mysterious way, but even he obeys the laws of logic. And if it is true, as Kant argued, that only in a world bound by cause and effect can there be consciousness and freedom, our world must be subject to the law of causality. In which case, the world, and all things contained in it, evolve — to the point where God becomes perceivable.

It is true that much sin has been committed in the name of Christ. As Kennedy tells us, the Spanish Inquisition murdered 10,000 innocent people over a period of 30 years. But with what do we compare this fact? With the crimes of the Muslims? With those of the Hindus? Or with those of the atheists? (The Soviet Communist Party, in its heyday, managed 10,000 murders a week.)

As for chastity and virginity, they are ideals, whose moral reality lies less in the achievement than in the attempt. Their beauty as ideals cannot be understood merely by observing the sordid antics of those who betray them. Why not study instead the medieval literature through which chastity shines like the sun through stained glass? Kennedy is at his most parochial in his mutterings about sex — drawing his arguments from the sex-obsessed feminist Uta Ranke-Heinemann, and ignoring all but the downside of the thing that he describes. Look in his indictment for the names of St Teresa of Avila, or our own Julian of Norwich, and you will look in vain. But it is they who are the authorities on chastity. And if you think Christianity has been destructively repressive about sex, try living in a Muslim country for a few months.

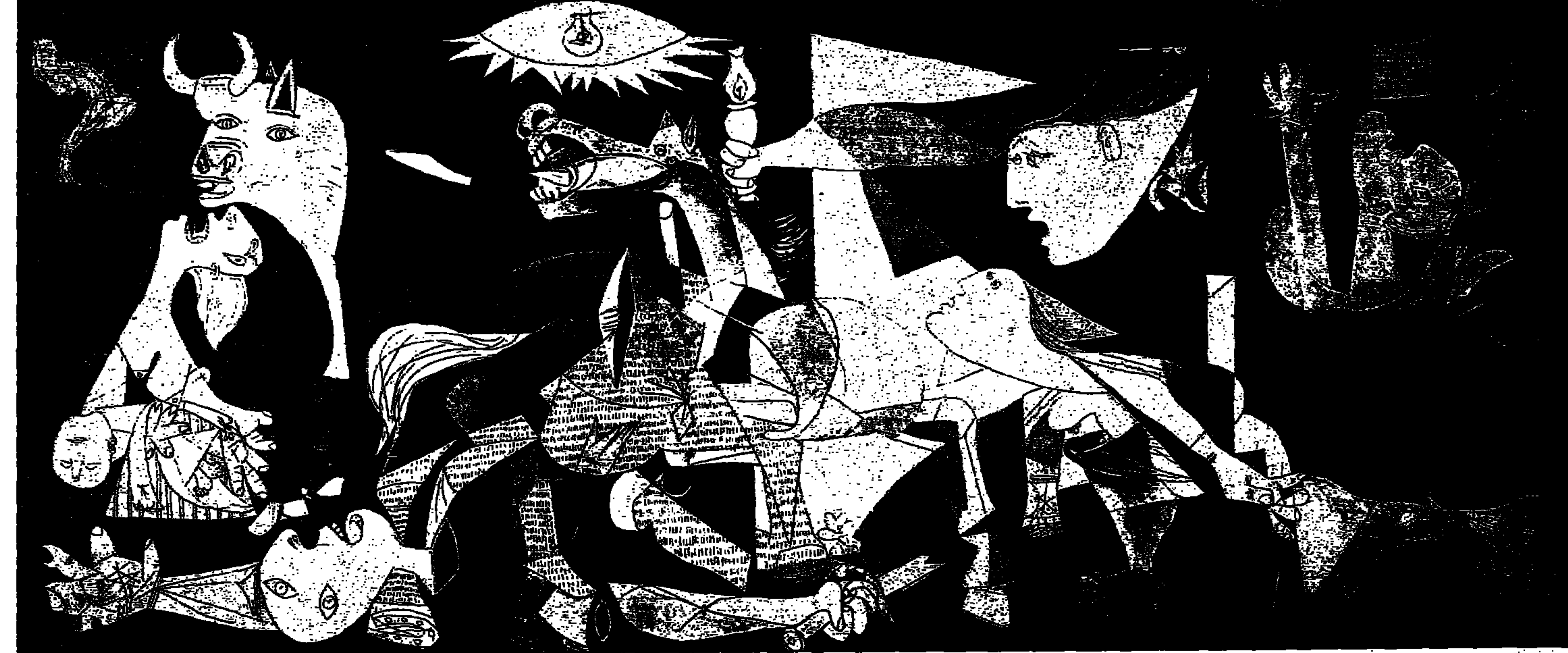
The argument could go on for ever, and no doubt will. Suffice it to say that this honest, good-natured and one-sided book leaves everything where it was, and that its message of optimism — informing us that television and organised sport are adequate substitutes for the faith we have lost — will recommend itself only to those who have not learnt to qualify the noun "optimism", as Schopenhauer did, with the adjective "unscrupulous".

BOOKS

A ride on the 20th-Century Limited

One hundred years in how many pages? asks **Felipe Fernàndez-Armesto**

SUCCESSION PICASSO/DACS 1999



Pablo Picasso painted *Guernica* in 1937 in response to the German bombing of the town during the Spanish Civil War: the attack was a bloody foretaste of the uses of technology during the Second World War

Histories of the 20th century are like buses: you wait almost a hundred years for one and then they all come along at once. For a fast route and a top-deck view, you can take *The Oxford History*; or *you can travel with Martin* Gilbert, who halts at every stop and never gets out of slow gear; or you can board the Clapham omnibus with Hunter Davies and hear the passengers chat.

Whichever you choose, the ride is bound to be bumpy. Paradox is our century's only consistency. Progress has never *been faster, or more* widely repudiated. Knowledge has grown: so, even more, has nonsense. *Peace has never been so* valued, nor war so destructive. Technology, which is intended to be liberating, becomes tyrannous or trivial. Science and secularism lead to a resurgence of religions. Prosperity has never been so easy and *happiness has rarely seemed* so elusive. Good-life romantics, New Age freaks, Post-Modernist thinkers and the practitioners of massacre all crave escape from modern life. It has been a globalising century. We can conceive "one *world", create world-spanning* agencies, form breathtakingly big alliances. Meanwhile, historic hatreds have been recovered, superstates smashed. Worldwide cracks gape between east and west, north and south, Islam and the rest. *For Westerners, globalisation* means a world re-moulded in their own image; yet Western supremacy has been unravelled and the West is being counter-colonised by its former victims.

We have simultaneously the *oldest and youngest* populations in history. We also probably have, relatively speaking, the richest and poorest. We have never had so much pow*er over nature, or felt so* vulnerable to nature's revenge. We no longer fear a divine or man-made apocalypse but fret over climatic change, environmental exhaustion, asteroid bombardment and the coming plague.

Individual freedom and social solidarity have never been so highly valued or so hard to reconcile. The century of individual liberation has also been the century of over-planning. Human rights are loudly celebrated and ruthlessly suppressed; *lives officiously* prolonged and wantonly destroyed. The communist nirvana made people unhappy; social democratic utopias turned them suicidal. Now, where people are freest they wear the dreary uniforms of dress-down Fridays and sneaker-chic. Societies of democratic values and universal welfare seem *doomed* to self-subversion. Between the rocks, theo*rists dive for a "middle way"* and drown.

Can the history of such a disparate century be packed into a book? Martin Gilbert can scarcely contain it inside the three volumes he has planned. In ***The History of the 20th Century, Vol. 2, 1933-66*** (HarperCollins, £29.99; ISBN 0 00 215869 8) he arranges the material chronicle-style, year by year: the result is unremittingly formulaic, despite wonderfully fluent prose and vividly selected evidence. The new volume is more coherent than the first, because the story of the Second World War half-fills it; the Korean War dominates the rest. Cultural and intellectual history are still neglected. Yet Gilbert's technique grips the reader with a terrible power: like the annals ascribed to Confucius, his history is a catalogue of follies and evils which grow in horror as they are starkly told and tolled.

Hunter Davies, in ***Born 1900*** (Little, Brown, £16.99; ISBN 0 316 64471 4) has a similar deadpan routine but uses it for a feelgood effect. To enjoy his collection of friendly sketches of people and institutions born in 1900, you have, like *me*, to love the author's quirks: his delight in the mildly amusing, the small-scale and self-effacing, *his indifference* to anything striking or symbolic, portentous or profound. His "defining moments of the 1960s" are England's World Cup soccer victory and "the day the Beatles recorded *Sgt Pepper*". On Freud's couch, he admires *the pretty cushions. His claim* that the hamburger was invented in 1900 leads — along his mazy road — to "the cleanest lavatories in Hampstead". His interviewees burble unchallenged and maunder engagingly: "But, looking back now, *it's history, isn't it? Oh,* aye. Funny, really."

The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century (Edited by Michael Howard and William Roger Louis, OUP, £25; ISBN 0 19 820428 0) makes other denizens of the depot look like slowcoaches. It covers all routes in just over 300 pages. The editors, of both irresistible persuasiveness and prestige, have secured, in most cases, *the best-qualified contributors* in the world. Some of these authors have captured lifetimes of work in only a few lines. Readers of William McNeill on demography, Robert Skidelsky on the economy or Adam Roberts on international law, *will be inspired as well as in*formed. Most of the regional and chronological chapters are composed by masters of summation.

There is no theme, except a commitment to the disinterested description of "a process of *change", faintly coloured by* cautious optimism. Some essayists opt for soporific objectivity; others pursue enlivening agendas. Alan Ryan could hardly do justice to "Global Culture" — so substitutes a wry essay on the follies of Mod*ernism. Steven Weinberg's* chapter is impressive more for its vindication of the reality of knowledge than for its coverage of physics. This is a small book but a big achievement: a model of ambition without pretension, of compression with*out compromises.*

Dream countries

Aisling Foster reviews three collections of short stories

The husbands in Anthony Giardina's short stories, ***The Country of Marriage*** (Flamingo, £11.99, ISBN 0 00 225792 0) are an interesting lot. White, suburban *Americans, they are aware of* their ordinariness and of their vast distance from new *thoughts* or experience. *As* one of them says: "There's a raw world and there's a tame one, and I believe you make the choice early as to which you're *going to live in.*"

Their lives are the achievement of a dream which ignores the world elsewhere. If they wake to the fact that a marriage has grown cold, they avoid confrontation, quietly redrawing their schemes to fit *the circumstances. Communi*cation comes through silence. A fireman's desire for another child is sustained despite his partner's signs to the contrary; a wife's affair is played down by a husband for whom his baby is everything and "the *presence of a woman is not* enough to convince us we're not alone".

These stories vibrate with all the angst of Cheever and Updike, but there is no sign of the go-getting urgency of their American males. Instead, Gia*rdina has cornered a less well* known species, and in the sprawl of ribbon development he has opened territory which is completely his own.

*In **Hunger*** (Phoenix House, £15.99, ISBN 1 861 59071 7) Lan Samantha Chang's stories offer a different take on the American dream. These are tales of Chinese immigrants who sacrificed everything to come to the United States and *have raised their children* within the vacuum of two cultures. In the title novella, the wife of a talented violinist watches helplessly as her husband fails in his career before focusing his ambition upon his two daughters. The result is pre*dictable, but the spare beauty* of the writing turns the disappointments of family life into a deeply disturbing fairy tale.

Communication gaps yawn open. The *parents* miss the subtlety with which they can express themselves in Manda*rin, and lose contact with their* children. What is missing is the other homeland inside every immigrant's head. Without describing it, even interesting characters remain as incomplete as the faded statistics *in an* Ellis Island register.

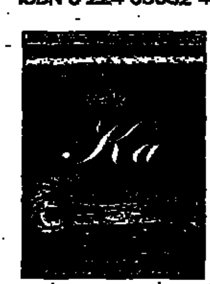
Far from American self-analysis, the males who populate Alan Wall's collection, ***Richard Dadd in Bedlam & other Stories*** (Secker & Warburg, £9.99, ISBN 0 436 22080 6) epitomise the gruff, private qualities of some land which is forever Yorkshire. The detective in the first story lives in the West Riding. Aged 51, he is semi-retired and finds a stint in London too much for his aged frame to bear.

He tells a good story, though, not unlike a television script for *A Touch of Frost*. The use of different voices is impressive elsewhere, but there are similarities in character. Whether a press photographer, a pig breeder in Roman Galilee or Rembrandt on his *death* bed, these *men are* loners, the thoughtful, self-sufficient types who know their Bible and see women as angels or whores. Apart from Bradford, their world seems more limited and a great deal nastier then any beltway suburb or *emigrant Chinatown.*

Blind to the eye of the East

ANDREW ROBINSON

KA
By Roberto Calasso
Jonathan Cape, £16.99
ISBN 0 224 05052 4





The Hindu god Ganesha: *Ka* uses Westernised images

"The modern retelling of ancient tales gener*ally makes for a spuri*ous kind of literature ... It's no good unless the stories can be made first-hand again, dragged up out of the artist's own invention again, and that hasn't often happened outside poetry. But it's happened here. These are the best retellings of Indian tales that I've read, and I've read some hundreds." Thus Ted Hughes on that master storyteller R. K. Narayan's refashionings of Indian myths and scripture, which are almost as lively and full of humanity as Narayan's novels.

Roberto Calasso's mining of similar sources, *Ka*, translated from the Italian by Tim Parks, has, unfortunately, none of Narayan's qualities. It is an attempt to do for India what Calasso successfuly did for Western classical myths in *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*. But where the earlier book was wise and witty and wore its learning lightly, *Ka* is portentous, humourless and freighted with dubious philosophy.

The blurb claims that Calas*so "doesn't explain or de*scribe" the mental world of ancient India — "he regenerates it through its epic cyclical stories and customs, until we no longer need to define it for ourselves because we have come to know what it is." This is not so. For much of the book, storytelling is abandoned for disquisition on the meaning of the stories — unlike the earlier book, in which the stories had priority over the *author's inter*pretations. When, rarely, a story is given room to breathe, Calasso's obvious narrative talents flash to the fore.

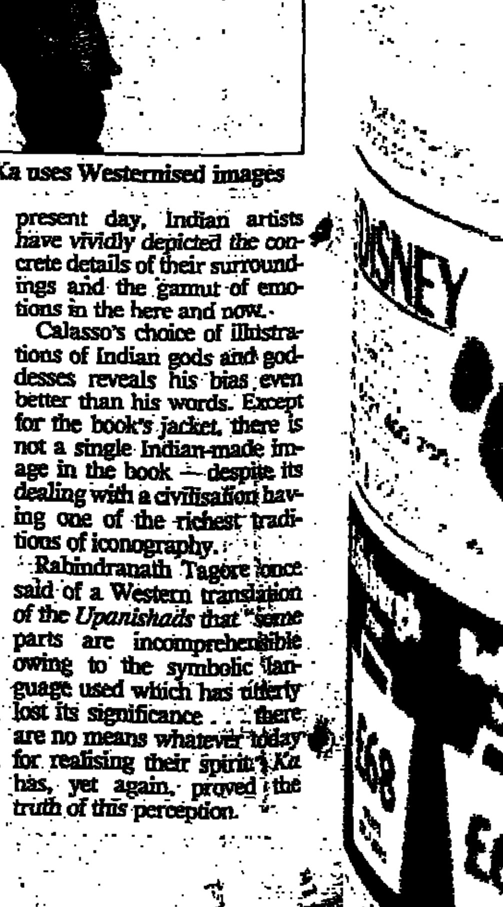
His task is made much *more difficult* by his *decision* to concentrate on the early works of Indian literature, the *Vedas, Upanishads* and *Brahmanas*; the later *Mahabharata* is treated in a highly compressed manner, with its celebrated *Bhagavad Gita* barely mentioned; Kalidasa, the greatest of the Sanskrit writers, makes only a guest appearance; and the *Ramayana* is totally omitted. Perhaps Calasso wanted to avoid traversing the same ground as Peter Brook. But the effect is to deprive the reader of *most of the really in*teresting psychological drama in ancient Indian literature in favour of abstract thought and bizarre miracles.

In 20th-century India, it is the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* that remain a living presence, while the *Vedas* and *Upanishads* are chiefly the *province* of scholars and the tedious *Brahmanas* have been consigned to the same fate as that of the obscurer parts of the Old Testament. Calasso seems determined to fly in the face of this reality.

Like dozens of Western scholars past and present — some of whom he quotes — he is deeply drawn to the idea of India as a land of meditating sages without interest in the physical world and the earthly existence of *human* beings. Not only does this view make for dull reading in a book of stories, it is also a serious oversimplification of the Indian reality. *From ancient times to the* present day, Indian artists have *vividly depicted the con*crete details of their surroundings and the gamut of emotions in the here and now.

Calasso's choice of illustrations of Indian gods and goddesses reveals his bias even better than his words. Except for the book's jacket, there is not a single Indian-made image in the book — despite its *dealing* with a civilisation having one of the richest traditions of iconography.

Rabindranath Tagore once said of a Western translation *of the Upanishads* that "some parts are incomprehensible owing to the symbolic language used which has utterly lost its significance ... there are no means whatever today for realising their spirit." *Ka* has, yet again, proved the truth of this perception.



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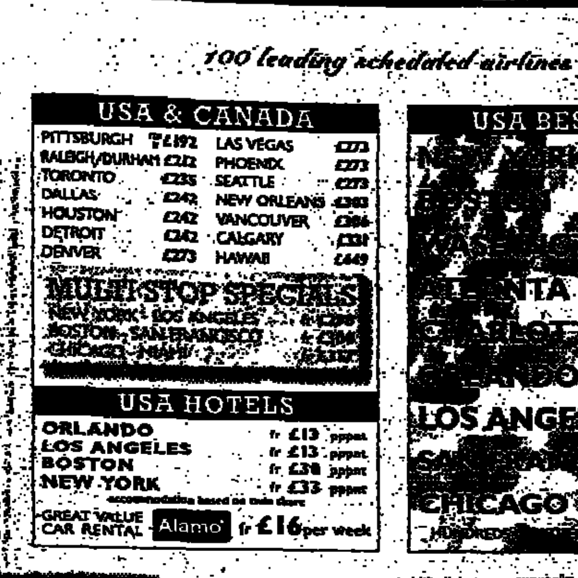
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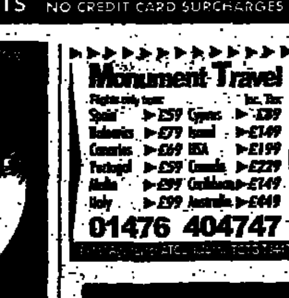
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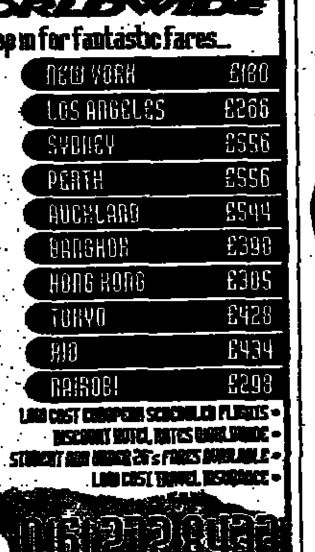
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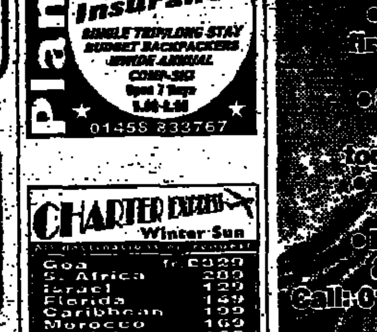
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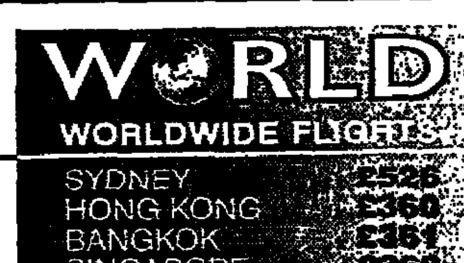


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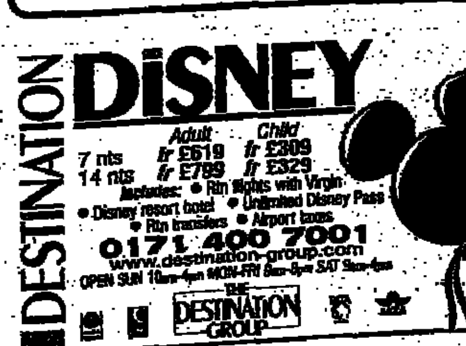
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ANTIGUA	£299	MELBOURNE	£559
ATHENS	£158	MEMPHIS	£259
ATLANTA	£199	MEXICO CITY	£379
AUCKLAND	£359	MIAMI	£229
BAHRAIN	£299	MINNEAPOLIS	£324
BALTIMORE	£199	MONTEGO BAY	£398
BARBADOS	£298	MONTREAL	£249
BERMUDA	£398	MOSCOW	£229
BOMBAY	£348	MUSCAT	£299
BORDEAUX	£148	MYRTLE BEACH	£299
BOSTON	£198	NAIROBI	£299
BRISBANE	£559	NASHVILLE	£298
BRUSSELS	£78	NASSAU	£299
BUDAPEST	£189	NEWARK	£159
BUENOS AIRES	£498	NEW ORLEANS	£299
BUFFALO	£289	NEW YORK	£188
CAIRNS	£559	NICE	£119
CAIRO	£199	ORLANDO	£229
CALGARY	£298	OTTAWA	£249
CANCUN	£398	PALM SPRINGS	£329
CAPE TOWN	£199	PARIS	£89
CHARLOTTE	£199	PERTH	£559
CHICAGO	£199	PHILADELPHIA	£199
CINCINNATI	£299	PHOENIX	£298
COSTA RICA	£399	PITTSBURG	£199
DALLAS	£279	PORTLAND	£329
DARWIN	£559	PRAGUE	£159
DAYTONA BEACH	£299	PUERTO VALLARTA	£399
DELHI	£348	RALEIGH DURHAM	£198
DENVER	£298	RIO DE JANEIRO	£465
DETROIT	£279	SALT LAKE CITY	£329
DUBAI	£249	SAN ANTONIO	£279
DURBAN	£399	SAN DIEGO	£279
EDMONTON	£299	SAN FRANCISCO	£279
EL PASO	£299	SAN JUAN	£399
FRANKFURT	£119	SAO PAULO	£465
FREEPORT	£299	SARASOTA	£299
FORT LAUDERDALE	£249	SEATTLE	£299
FORT MYERS	£299	SINGAPORE	£369
GENEVA	£116	ST LOUIS	£299
GRAND CAYMAN	£399	ST LUCIA	£299
GRENADA	£299	SYDNEY	£458
HALIFAX	£249	TAMPA	£249
HAVANA	£398	TOBAGO	£299
HAWAII	£498	TOKYO	£428
HONG KONG	£368	TORONTO	£249
HOUSTON	£279	TOULOUSE	£149
JOHANNESBURG	£199	TUCSON	£329
KANSAS CITY	£299	VANCOUVER	£299
KINGSTON	£399	WASHINGTON	£199
KUWAIT	£348	WEST PALM BEACH	£299
LAGOS	£349	ZURICH	£126

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All fares listed are return from London (regional fares may vary) subject to Americana booking conditions and availability. Seasonal flight supplements will apply to different travel periods. Airport tax included.

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New Year shopper offers.

0845 6071623

British Midland
The Airline for Europe

Bargains of the week: from special offers on short breaks in trendy Dublin to diving courses in the Red Sea

PACK YOUR BAGS

■ *A selection of last-minute holidays and travel opportunities at home, on the Continent and further afield, many at bargain prices*

BRITISH ISLES

DESPERATE to fill their properties in the dog days of January, Britain's hoteliers are offering a host of special deals, which is good news for those who failed to escape over Christmas or new year or were so exhausted by the festivities that they need another break, *Tony Dawe writes.*

The Arcadian Hotels group is leading the way with bed and breakfast in its country house hotels in Cheshire, Kent, Warwickshire and Yorkshire costing a couple £99 a night, provided they stay a minimum of two nights.

Guests at Wood Hall in the Yorkshire countryside can join in activities guided by the gamekeeper, including hawking, badger-watching and fishing. Visitors to the "Molly B" near Chester, which has a special dinner, B&B rate for short breaks, will even find a Cheshire cheese and port awaiting them. Details: 0800-174125.

■ CONSORT Hotels is offering weekend breaks at its Castle Green Hotel in Kendal in the Lake District for £99 for a couple, including full breakfast and use of the leisure facilities. The offer is available on January 29 and 30 and February 19 and 20, with a one-night stay on offer at half the price. Details: 01539 734000.

■ MAYFAIR for two nights costs rather more, but the £350 package offered by The Chesterfield includes breakfast and accommodation for two in a room with king-size bed and a £25 voucher to top shops. Presuming that most January visitors head for the sales, the hotel offers a free foot massage and drink every evening. Details: 0171-491 2622.

■ FREE BEER and a bag of horse manure are among the extras included in Wiltshire weekend breaks centred on the 125-year-old Wadworth brewery in Devizes. A tour, drayman's lunch and the chance to muck out and exercise the brewery's shire horses all form part of the break, which costs £140 for two nights' dinner, B&B at the Black Swan, plus all those extras. Details: 01380 723259.

■ DUBLIN will become even more popular for short breaks this year as special offers come into force. Stay on Friday and Saturday at the Camden Court Hotel and Sunday will be free with Irish Ferries Holidays, which is offering the B&B package plus return ferry travel with car for £133. The price is based on four travelling and is sadly unavailable when Ireland's rugby team is playing at Lansdowne Road. Details: 0990 170000.

■ CAMPUS Travel is joining the air fares war to the Irish capital with return flights from Stansted available for students and under-26s for £54, plus tax, and from Heathrow for £61. The offer is valid for departures until the end of March, returning within a year. Details: 0171-730 3402.



Country life: join the gamekeeper on a Yorkshire break

St Nicholas Church in Prague: four nights in a central three-star hotel are available for £249, including flights

CRUISING is good value in the first two months of the year and several lines are offering deals that work out at less than £60 a day for everything including flights. Eleven days' sailing through the Mediterranean and down to Madeira, the Canary Islands and Morocco from January 30 costs £638 with Festival Cruises. The trip starts with a flight from Gatwick to Genoa and is also available for February 10 and 21 departures at £44 more. Details: 0171-436 0827.

■ A FORTNIGHT'S cruise to similar destinations is on offer for £695 from Fred Olsen Cruise Lines, but this trip is all at sea. Sail from Dover on *Black Prince* on January 22 and call at Madeira, Lanzarote, Agadir and Lisbon. Details: 01473 292222.

■ SKIING may be the most popular holiday pastime in Europe at this time of year, but it is available at bargain prices. Lunn Poly offers a week in a basic hotel in the French Pyrenees for £159, based on four people sharing. The Thomson holiday starts with a flight from Gatwick on January 16. Details from Lunn Poly Holiday Shops.

■ CLAVIERE, an Italian ski resort with a grand 1920s hotel, is on offer from Crystal Ski, especially for those who can fly from Newcastle on January 24. For them, a week's half-board will cost £299, a £125 saving. The same hotel and destination is available from other airports for £395. Details: 0181-399 5144.

■ NICE is as trendy as ever at this time of year, although there may be fewer beauties on the beach. Eurotours is launching six-day trips to the Riviera from January 19, based on train travel. The package costs from £259 and includes Eurostar seats from London to Lille, TGV to Nice and five nights' B&B. Details: 0181-289 8889.

■ PARIS is also available at a special price — if you can travel on Monday. A four-night Airtours break, including return flights from Manchester and B&B, costs only £109 with Co-op Travelcare. Details: 0541 500388.

■ SAVINGS on breaks to the "winter wonderland" city of Prague are available for the next three months from Travellers Czech. Four nights in a central three-star hotel now cost £249, including return scheduled flights from Heathrow, and can be enjoyed at weekends, as well as midweek. Details: 01959 540700.

■ WINTER sun holidays are also available at good prices with First Choice. A fortnight's self-catering in Paphos, Cyprus, costs £189, including a flight from Luton next Wednesday. Details: 0870 750 0100.

■ VALENTINE'S DAY is the next special date in many diaries and the offers are already pouring in — for holiday deals, at least. A champagne weekend might be an appropriate way of celebrating and Arblaster & Clarke Wine Tours is proposing two nights in Rheims on February 13 and 14, with tours and tastings at champagne houses and several splendid meals. The cost of £249 includes coach travel. Details: 01730 893344.

■ FOR something completely different, Wildlife Worldwide suggests spending Valentine's Day, and the evening of the full Moon two days later, tracking the wolf population of the Bieszczady Mountains. The offer forms part of a nine-day natural history tour of Poland, including the chance to see bison, brown bears and eagles. The trip starts with a flight from Heathrow on February 12 and costs £995 with accommodation, meals and a guide. Details: 0181-667 9158.

AS TONY BLAIR and his family return from the Seychelles, Elite Vacations is offering an excellent deal to an area which they did not visit. Not surprising really, because it's called Fairyland. The name belongs to a stretch of coast on Mahé, which boasts a small beachside hotel where a five-night stay costs £698 and 12 nights £929, including return scheduled flights.

For those on a prime minister's salary, the secluded Hotel L'Archipel on Praslin is available from £1,019 for five nights with flights, and £1,658 for 12 nights. Details: 0181-864 4431.

■ ACROSS the Indian Ocean in Goa, Direct Line Holidays is offering a fortnight's B&B at the new Prazeres Resort Hotel at Candolim for £399. The deal is available with a flight from Gatwick on January 23. Details: 0181-239 8000.

■ SOUTH AFRICA for £199 return must be the cheapest deal yet and is available from Bridge The World for an Air Namibia flight from Heathrow to Johannesburg or Cape Town on February 2. Details: 0171-911 0900.

■ DIVING courses are available in conjunction with trips to Red Sea resorts with Regal Holidays and will hardly seem an extravagance because the basic price for a week's B&B and return flights from Gatwick this month is £189. Courses cost from £160 to £230 for a fast-track programme. Details: 01353 778096.

■ THE BUSTLE of Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur, combined with a peaceful beach holiday on Pangkor Island, Malaysia, is the unusual package offered by Magic of the Orient. Fly from Heathrow to Hong Kong for five nights in a central hotel, then to the Malaysian capital for a couple of nights, before continuing to the Pan Pacific Resort for five more nights with half-board. The package is available until March 21 for £988. Details: 01293 537700.

■ MARGARITA is more than a drink: it's an island in the southern Caribbean where a fortnight's all-inclusive holiday is on offer for £589 from Eclipse, with flights from Gatwick or Manchester on January 27. Details: 0990 010203.

■ COLORADO might seem a long way to go for a week's skiing but Breckenridge is a popular resort with Britons, offering a lively nightlife and extensive runs. It is available for a relatively modest £689 from Ski Independence. The deal includes a return flight from Heathrow and chalet accommodation with breakfast, afternoon tea and dinner with wine. Details: 0990 550555.

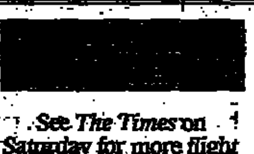
■ SAN DIEGO could be ideal in January, with temperatures in the high sixties rather than the scorching levels of the summer. Thomas Cook Holidays is offering a week in the city for £479, children aged two to 11 can go for £230. The deal includes return flights from Gatwick, car hire and accommodation at the Dana Inn, which is the closest hotel to Sea World and is well-positioned for other attractions. Details: 01733 418100.

■ SYDNEY and its beaches can be enjoyed for three days before setting sail for the Whitsunday Islands, the Great Barrier Reef, Bali, Java and finally Singapore on an Australian Adventure offered by Orient Lines. The trip starts with a flight from London on March 9 and costs from £2,250. A Highlights of New Zealand cruise, after a flight from London on February 25, is available from the same company from £1,750. Details: 0171-409 2500.



Ever popular Bondi Beach

● *All prices based on two travelling together and sharing a room unless otherwise stated.*



See *The Times* on Saturday for more flight bargains and last-minute holidays

Richard Evans on a former teacher relishing the challenge of handicapping

Smith plays the weighting game

On his 21st birthday, Philip Smith and some fellow students from Southampton University decided to celebrate by attending the Derby at Epsom. It proved to be the defining day of his life — in more ways than one.

Not only did one of the friends on that glorious June afternoon later become Mrs Smith, but on his first visit to a racecourse the young history and economics student fell in love with racing as Nijinsky surged to victory under Lester Piggott.

The very next day, he pursued a belief, borne out of his studies, that there had to be some mathematical process for evaluating the performances of horses and bought a copy of *Racehorses Of 1969*, the Timeform annual containing ratings for every horse in training. Thus began a passion for handicapping.

For a quarter of a century, while he taught PE, then history and economics and, finally, maths, he developed the skill during evenings and weekends. After concentrating initially on two-year-olds, he then rated group and listed horses and wrote a book on the subject, which caught the eye of Geoffrey Gibbs, the then senior Jockey Club handicapper.

"I had thought for a number of years how wonderful it would be to be one of those mysterious BHB handicappers, never dreaming that it could become a possibility." However, in 1995 a vacancy arose; Smith again caught the eye of Gibbs and suddenly the teacher, who had supplemented his income most years with some shrewd wagers, was poacher-turned-gamekeeper as he became one of those mystery men at Portman Square.

After starting off rating stayers on the Flat, he progressed to sprinters before taking over at the start of this month from Christopher Mordaunt as the chasing handicapper. His is an onerous task, according a rating (and therefore a handicap weight) to 2,145 horses, ranging from those who run in the lowliest races at the poorer tracks, to the equine heroes who will line up at Aintree for the Grand National in April. Make a mistake — or even a perceived error, such as letting a horse in too lightly or penalising it too harshly — and the wrath of trainers, owners and punters will descend upon his head. Smith appears to relish the challenge.

"What we are trying to do is to set everyone a puzzle and to make that puzzle as difficult as possible. We don't want racing tipsters or punters finding a handicap easy to solve. We want people to put time and effort into it — as we do."

At the heart of a handicapper's philosophy is the desire to frame handicaps so that all the runners have an equal chance and finish in a dead-heat. Impossible, of course, but handicaps are still the toughest nuts to crack because of their very nature — yet punters relish the challenge of the likes of the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup, the Ayr Gold Cup or the Royal Hunt Cup.

"Of course, they like handicaps because they want to pit their wits against mine. That is my job satisfaction; I want to set a problem that they will find difficult to solve."

Smith continued: "Take the Ayr Gold Cup, for example, which is an early-closing race. If the job is done properly, you get open betting and in the week leading up to the race last year they were betting 14-1 the field. I took that as a huge compliment. If there had been a 3-1 favourite I would have felt I had not done my job properly because the perception of punters would have been that something had been let in lightly. Similarly, I would not want to see any 66-1 shots because that would imply they had got no chance."

In recent years, there has been a perception that chasing handicaps have been easier to crack than most because winners have not been harshly penalised, which has resulted in an overall "slippage" in the ratings of chasers. Smith thinks such criticism is unfair — he believes the 10lb difference between the median rating of hurdlers and chasers is more to blame — nevertheless, his style of handicapping chasers is likely to result in harsher treatment to winners.

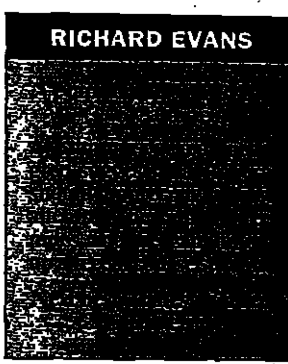
"About three years ago, Mathew Tester [the two-year-old handicapper] carried out some research which showed that while a horse in a handicap had an 8 per cent chance of winning, a horse who won a handicap had a 16 per cent chance of winning a handicap next time. That figure alarmed me and prompted me to adopt a slightly more rigorous approach to winners of races. Philosophically, I became slightly harder on winners and I am bringing that philosophy to jumping."

A quick glance at his assessment of last weekend's winners backs up the point. Fourth In Line, who won at Newbury for Venetia Williams, has gone up 13lb. "I am not trying to stop winners winning again, but I want the owners and trainers of horses behind Fourth In Line to think that they can beat him if they try again. That is the principle I will work to all the time. I want owners and trainers to feel when they run in one of my handicaps they have a chance of winning."

So, what is his tip to punters? "Don't bet in handicaps," he says, in all-seriousness, "unless you are prepared to put in the time. On average, it takes me an hour to evaluate a handicap, so I would back my experience against someone who looks at a race for just a few minutes."

Don't say you have not been warned.

RICHARD EVANS



JOHN OST



Smith has recently been appointed to take over from Christopher Mordaunt as senior National Hunt handicapper by the BHB

Maguire to ride French Holly

ADRIAN MAGUIRE has been booked to partner French Holly in the AIG Irish Champion Hurdle at Leopardstown on January 24 after the gelding's regular rider, Andrew Thornton, yesterday conceded defeat in his race to be fit for the showdown with Istabraq.

Thornton, who has an infection in his left leg, broken in a fall at Fontwell last May, hopes to return to the saddle by the end of next month.

Maguire is now riding as a freelance after resigning his post of stable jockey to David Nicholson last week, and the booking represents one of the first major engagements of his new status.

"It is very unfortunate but I am absolutely delighted," the Irishman said. "He is a very good horse and anyone would be delighted to ride him.

"I haven't ridden the horse before, but he has won some good races and beaten some good horses. I am very impressed with him."

Arguably the best performance of French Holly's career came when successful in the 2½-mile Royal & SunAlliance Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival last March, but Maguire is confident he will be able to cope with the best at two miles, particularly after his recent success in the Christmas Hurdle at Kempton.

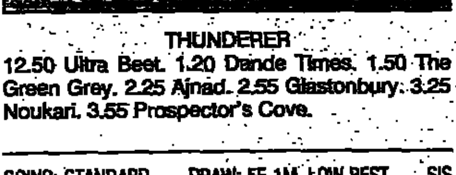
A dry night on Tuesday has raised hopes that the 13th Ladbroke Hurdle, scheduled to be run at Leopardstown on Saturday, will beat the weather. Torrential rain on Monday night forced Joe Collins, the clerk of the course, to call an inspection for 4pm today. While that will still take place, the forecast has improved.

Johnson faces Jockey Club

RICHARD JOHNSON follows in the footsteps of the champion jockey, Tony McCoy, when he appears at Portman Square today having been referred to the Jockey Club disciplinary committee by the racecourse stewards at Cheltenham.

McCoy was given an 18-day ban (four days of which were deferred) by the Jockey Club after accumulating more than 15 days of suspension over the past year. Having also collected 15 days of bans since January 30 last year, Johnson passed the same threshold when partnering Jathib into third behind Eirespray at Cheltenham on New Year's Day.

The 21-year-old is second to McCoy in the jockeys' championship with 73 winners.



THUNDERER

12.50 Ultra Beet. 1.20 Dande Times. 1.50 The Green Grey. 2.25 Ajnad. 2.55 Glastonbury. 3.25 Noukari. 3.55 Prospector's Cove.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: 5F-1M, LOW BEST SIS

12.50 RED GAUNTLET SELLING STAKES (£2,019: 7f) (16 runners)

1.20 GUY MANNERING STAKES (£2,583: 5f) (4)

1.50 GET MARRIED AT LINGFIELD PARK HANDICAP (Div I: £1,718: 1m 2f) (9)

2.25 WAVERLEY MAIDEN STAKES (£3,583: 6f) (10)

2.55 LINGFIELD PARK ANTIQUES FAIR HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £3,615: 6f) (9)

3.25 IVANHOE HANDICAP (£2,107: 1m 5f) (8)

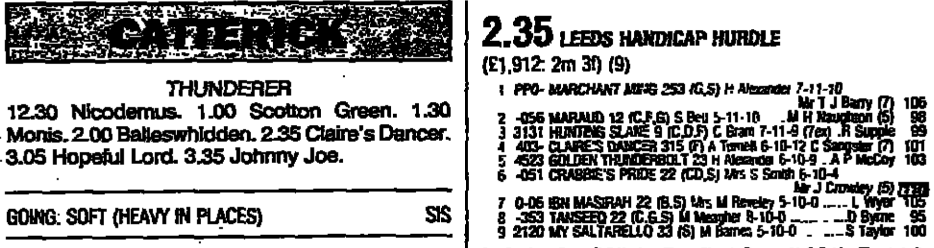
3.55 GET MARRIED AT LINGFIELD PARK HANDICAP (Div II: £1,718: 1m 2f) (8)

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S THREE MEETINGS

Lingfield Park

Musselburgh

Wolverhampton



THUNDERER

12.30 Nicodemus. 1.00 Scotton Green. 1.30 Monis. 2.00 Balleswhidden. 2.35 Claire's Dancer. 3.05 Hopeful Lord. 3.35 Johnny Joe.

GOING: SOFT (HEAVY IN PLACES) SIS

12.30 HALIFAX NOVICES HURDLE (£2,542: 2m) (19 runners)

1.00 WAKEFIELD NOVICES CHASE (£3,051: 3m 1f 110yd) (4)

1.30 BRADFORD SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (£1,646: 2m) (7)

2.00 WL & RECTOR CHRISTIE MEMORIAL TROPHY NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (£2,440: 2m) (6)

2.35 LEEDS HANDICAP HURDLE (£1,912: 2m 3f) (9)

3.05 ILKLEY HANDICAP CHASE (£2,840: 3m 1f 110yd) (11)

11-4 Sillars Stalker, 3-1 Hopeful Lord, 7-2 Flat Top, 9-2 La Riviera, 12-1 Eaton, 14-1 Bramblebery, 20-1 Dest Dizzy, 25-1 others.

3.35 HUDDERSFIELD STANDARD NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (£1,462: 2m) (13)

1		BARTON BELL J Mackie 6-11-5	S Durack	–
2	0-	CARTOFT DANCER 324 T Easterby 6-11-5	Mr J McNamara (5)	27
3		HIGHLAND GHILLIE L Lungo 6-11-5	I Jardine (7)	–
4	00-	JACK FLASH 331 (V) S Kettlewell 5-11-5	Mr A Evans (7)	–
5	03	JOHNNY JOE 22 (BF) L Lungo 6-11-5	Mr B Gibson (7)	[illegible]
6	00/2	OPEN FAIRWAY 21 W Storey 6-11-5	L Cummins (3)	51
7		ZAAMAIN N Waggott 5-11-5	N Hannity (7)	–
8		JUMBO ROSE A Ewbank 5-11-0	L Cooper (7)	–
9	00-0	MARTHA'S MOONSTONE 37 J Charlton 5-11-0	Mr M Bradburne (3)	52
10		RUSSIAN PRINCE J Coric 4-10-7	D McPhail (5)	–
11		SUPER NOMAD 5/ W Easterby 4-10-7	Mr A Dempsey (3)	–
12		HOLLYFIELD R Wood 4-10-2	Miss D Jones	–
13		TYNEMINE B Ellison 4-10-2	Mr J Crowley (5)	–

6-4 Open Fairway, 3-1 Johnny Joe, 5-1 Barton Bell, 6-1 Highland Ghillie, 10-1 Super Nomad, 16-1 Czech Dancer, 20-1 others.

MARKET RASEN

THUNDERER

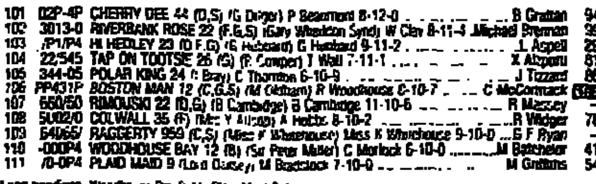
1.10 Riverbank Rose
1.40 CAIUS (nap)
2.10 Black Bullet
2.45 Springfield Scally
3.15 Jowoody
3.45 Ghost Moon

Timekeeper's top rating: 2.45 JUSTUCE ALONE.

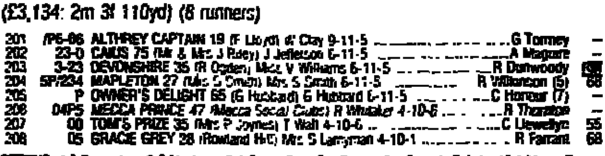
GOING: SOFT (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

1.10 GRANTHAM CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (£1,471: 3m) (11 runners)

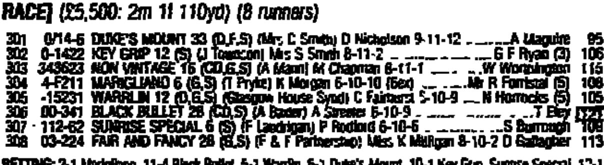
101	02P-4P	CHERRY DEE 44 (D,S) (G Dirger) P Beaumont 8-12-0	B Grattan	94
102	3013-0	RIVERBANK ROSE 22 (F,G,S) (Gary Wheeldon Synd) W Clay 8-11-4	Michael Brennan	39
103	/P1/P4	HI HEDLEY 23 (D,F,G) (G Hubbard) G Hubbard 9-11-2	L Aspell	29
104	22/545	TAP ON TOOTSIE 26 (G) (R Cooper) T Wall 7-11-1	X Aizpuru	81
105	344-05	POLAR KING 24 (? Bray) C Thornton 6-10-9	J Tizzard	86
106	PP431P	BOSTON MAN 12 (C,G,S) (M Oldham) R Woodhouse 6-10-7	C McCormack	[illegible]
107	660/50	RIMOUSKI 22 (D,G) (B Cambidge) B Cambidge 11-10-6	R Massey	–
108	5U02/0	COLWALL 35 (F) (Mrs Y Allsop) A Hobbs 8-10-2	R Widger	78
109	64065/	RAGGERTY 959 (C,S) (Miss F Whitehouse) Miss K Whitehouse 9-10-0	G F Ryan	–
110	-000P4	WOODHOUSE BAY 12 (B) (Sir Peter Miller) C Morlock 6-10-0	M Batchelor	41
111	/0-0P4	PLAID MAID 9 (Lord Daresbury) M Bradstock 7-10-0	M Griffiths	54



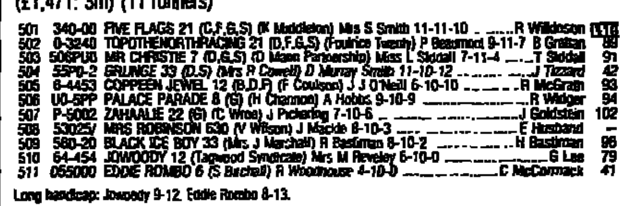
1.40 SPALDING NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (£3,134: 2m 3f 110yd) (8 runners)



2.10 TOTE HURDLE (SHOWCASE HANDICAP AND TOTE TRIFECTA RACE) (£5,500: 2m 1f 110yd) (8 runners)



2.45 BOSTON NOVICES HURDLE (£2,338: 3m) (9 runners)

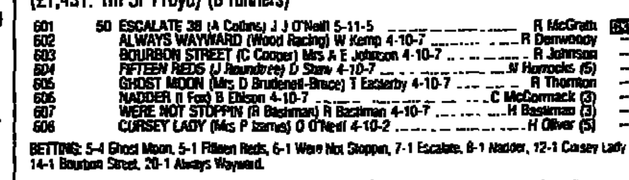


3.15 GRANTHAM CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (£1,471: 3m) (11 runners)

3.45 CLEETHORPES STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (£1,431: 1m 5f 110yd) (8 runners)

605	GHOST MOON (Mrs D Brudenell-Bruce) T Easterby 4-10-7	R Thornton	–
606	NADDER (I Fox) B Ellison 4-10-7	C McCormack (3)	–
607	WERE NOT STOPPIN (R Bastiman) R Bastiman 4-10-7	H Bastiman (3)	–
608	CURSEY LADY (Mrs P Izamo) O O'Neill 4-10-2	H Oliver (5)	–

BETTING: 5-4 Ghost Moon, 5-1 Fifteen Reds, 6-1 Were Not Stoppin, 7-1 Escalate, 8-1 Nadder, 12-1 Cursey Lady, 14-1 Bourbon Street, 20-1 Always Wayward.



Escalate 55l 9th of 11 to Mail Holland in maiden nat hunt flat at Worcester (2m, heavy), previously 21l 5th of 18 to Becca's Rose in national hunt flat race at Carlisle (2m 1f, soft). Always Wayward Terimon gelding out of a once-raced mare. Bourbon Street Dixie Brass gelding out of Riches. Fifteen Reds Jumbo Hirt gelding, brother to stayer Onelourseven and half-brother to Can She Can Can. Ghost Moon Cadeaux Genereux gelding out of Sickle Moon. Nadder Lion Cavern gelding out of Nadia Nerina, half brother to Catriona. Were Not Stoppin Mystiko colt, half-brother to 7f winner Sabot. Cursey Lady Ay Boo filly out of Babs Reflection VI.

NO SELECTION

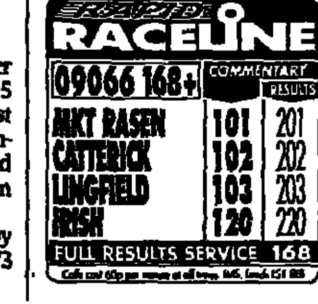
COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
D Nicholson	10	32	31.3	T Siddall	4	14	28.6
P Beaumont	9	38	23.7	A Maguire	10	47	21.3
J Jefferson	6	29	20.7	J McCarthy	4	19	21.1
T Easterby	7	35	20.0	R Farrant	5	25	20.0
Mrs S Lamyman	6	30	20.0	R Johnson	15	86	17.4
G Hubbard	5	26	19.2	R Dunwoody	8	51	15.7
Mrs M Reveley	18	97	18.6	C Llewellyn	5	37	13.5
A Streeter	4	25	16.0	R Thornton	9	69	13.0

COURSE SPECIALISTS

CATTERICK: Trainers: R Fahey, 3 winners from 11 runners, 27.3%; T Easterby, 10 from 41, 24.4%, Mrs A Swinbank, 5 from 21, 23.8%, Mrs M Reveley, 20 from 98, 20.4%, J Charlton, 7 from 41, 17.1%; G M Moore, 10 from 66, 15.2%; L Lungo, 8 from 54, 14.8%. Jockeys: R Garritty, 12 winners from 59 rides, 20.3%; N Hannity, 3 from 16, 18.8%, L Wyer, 9 from 64, 14.1%, R Supple, 10 from 75, 13.3%, D Byrne, 4 from 37, 10.8%.

LINGFIELD PARK: Trainers: J Noseda, 6 winners from 11 runners, 54.5%. T Barron, 10 from 29, 34.5%; R Armstrong, 14 from 70, 20.0%, J Hills, 16 from 106, 15.1%, P Burgoyne, 5 from 35, 14.3%, Miss G Kelleway, 41 from 286, 14.3%. Jockeys: Kimberley Hart, 7 winners from 14 rides, 50.0%, P Roberts, 9 from 41, 22.0%; W Ryan, 41 from 246, 16.7%; S Whitworth, 51 from 367, 13.9%; A Clark, 72 from 578, 12.5%.



THE BEST SPORTING YEAR OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Matthews or DiMaggio?

Here's a game that anyone *can play — and everyone* can win. It started this week across *the Atlantic* where that champion American magazine, *Sports Illustrated*, posed the question: "What's the best sports year ever?'

"We hold this truth to be self-evident," the magazine proclaimed, "that all sports years are not created equal ... and, in fact, most years really aren't particularly special."

Sports Illustrated nominates its top dozen years of the 20th century, but, as you might fear, their choices have a distinctly American flavour and only those with a working knowledge of sport in the United States are going to be up to deciphering the citations.

Typical, for instance, is 1941 which *comes in at No 6 on their list. Here are* their reasons for picking it:

"DiMaggio's 56 *straight; that last* .400 by Ted Williams; Louis knocks out Conn in 13th; Whirlaway *wins* Triple Crown as Arcaro wins his first of two; Craig Wood is first to win *Masters* and US Open in same year."

Those of us who live closer to Euroland and whose favourite sporting moments are rooted in Britain will have very different reasons for picking the moments to remember. So here is a top ten of the great sporting years of the century looked at through less transatlantic eyes.

There is plenty of choice — from the innocent days of the Edwardians to the highly professionalised showbusiness spectaculars that close the century.

A year as early as 1903 *gets on the short*list because of the vision of a former cyclist and desperate newspaper editor, Henri Desgranges, who dreamt up the idea of a month-long Tour de France cycle race with Fr20,000 in prize-money. Even then there were recognisably modern problems, for it was in that year that the Jockey Club banned doping after two owners and one trainer had won £2 million over five seasons by betting on drugged horses.

BRYANT'S EYE

Among the years fighting for the title, who could leave out 1953 — set *alight by* the magic of Stanley *Matthews, at the age* of 38, coaxing Blackpool to a 4-3 victory over Bolton Wanderers *before* a crowd of 100,000 in the FA Cup *Final?* A few months later, in 1954, a 24-year-old Oxford student, Roger Bannister, made that year one of the greats by running the mile in 3min 59.4sec at Iffley Road.

Nor could anyone leave out 1966 with England's World Cup victory over West Germany, while competing hard for the title must be 1977 with Red Rum romping to his third Grand National and *Virginia Wade taking the ladies'* title at the centenary Wimbledon. John McEnroe *made* his first appearance at the championships, and Liverpool, already the *League* champions, beat Borussia Mönchengladbach for the European Cup.

But the winning year, the one no sports lover can ever forget, must be 1981. Ian Botham, looking every inch the *Boys' Own* hero, seemed to retain the Ashes virtually on his own. As a cricketer and as a character, with his fishing, drinking, gambling, batting and bowling, he mesmerised his adoring public.

While he was achieving the impossible, Seb Coe and Steve Ovett swopped the world mile record *three times* in a nine-day purple patch. By the time they had finished, Coe had the record back with 3min 47.33sec. For thousands more, 1981 will be remembered for the *first* of Chris Brasher's London Marathons.

Sports Illustrated nominates as its greatest the year we have just left behind — 1998. *It is one that* might have been on my shortlist, too. But a young man called *Beckham put the* boot into that. So 1981 is the winner, though as far as the century goes there is still 1999. Who knows, that might yet top all the lists? For as every sportsman *knows* — or at least dreams — the best season of all is always the one still to come.

JOHN BRYANT

1981 ①

Botham wins Ashes

Shergar strolls the Derby

Coe-Ovett swap mile record 3 times *in 9 days*

Torvill & Dean get perfect 6s in British championships

McEnroe beats Borg at Wimbledon

First London Marathon (7,700 starters)

Bob Champion (cancer victim) wins Grand National on Aldaniti

1924 ④

Harold Abrahams & Eric Liddell win gold in Chariots of Fire Olympics

Paavo Nurmi gets five gold medals

Johnny "Tarzan" Weissmuller swims to three golds

First Winter Olympics in Chamonix

Beginning of **Hobbs** and **Sutcliffe** opening partnership for England



1966 ⑤

Alf Ramsey's England win World Cup

Jonah Barrington becomes World No 1 at squash

Jack Brabham wins world motor racing championship in the car he built

Golfer **Jack Nicklaus** wins the Open



1948 ⑥

Fanny Blankers-Koen runs and jumps to world records *in 100m, 80m hurdles*, high jump and long jump at London Olympic Games

Emil Zatopek wins his first *Olympic gold*

Don Bradman ends his Test career at the Oval with a Test average of 99.94

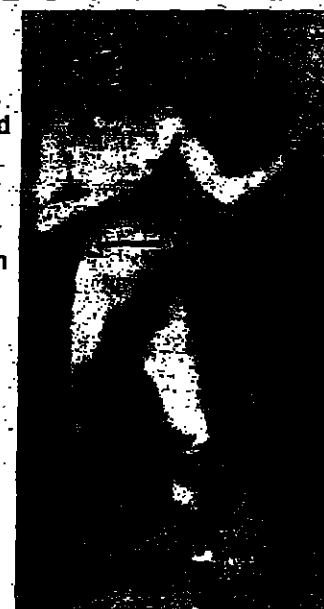


1903 ⑦

Tour de France launched as publicity stunt by sport *paper L'Auto* (*renamed L'Equipe* at the end of World War II)

Cornishman **Bob Fitzsimmons** wins world light-heavyweight title in San Francisco

Jockey Club bans doping



1936 ⑧

Black American athletes, led by **Jesse Owens**, take seven gold, three silver and three bronze medals at the 1936 "Nazi" Olympics

Boxer **Joe Louis** knocked out by Max Schmeling in Yankee Stadium

Britain's first televised football match – **Arsenal v Everton**



1908 ⑨

Marathon runner **Dorando Pietri** carried over the line and disqualified in London Olympic Games

Britain wins 56 gold medals at Games

Jack Hobbs scores 83 on his Test debut in Melbourne

Dr W. G. Grace *ends first-class career at 59*

Manchester United win their first League title



1954 ⑩

Roger Bannister breaks four-minute mile at Oxford

Lester Piggott wins his first Derby on Never Say Die

Chris Chataway beats Russian Vladimir Kuts under White City floodlights



1977 ②

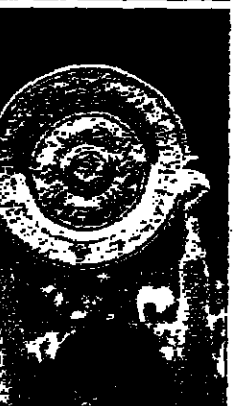
Red Rum wins third Grand National

John McEnroe hits Wimbledon *for first time*

Liverpool league champions; European Cup winners, FA Cup finalists

Virginia Wade wins centenary Wimbledon

Geoff Boycott returns to help win the Ashes



1953 ③

Hillary & Tensing conquer Everest

England capture the Ashes

Sir Gordon Richards at 49, wins his first Derby

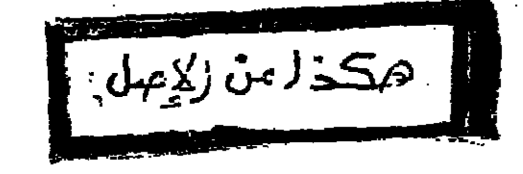
Stanley Matthews, 38, wins FA Cup Final medal



SPORTS ILLUSTRATED'S BEST YEARS

1. **1998** McGwire and Sosa set baseball home-run records, Elway wins Super Bowl at last, France wins World Cup
2. **1919** Dempsey wins heavyweight title, Chicago 'Black Sox' baseball scandal, Lenglen wins first Wimbledon
3. **1973** Miami Dolphins have perfect NFL season, George Foreman wins heavyweight title
4. ***1975*** *Muhammad Ali beats Foreman in Manila*, Ashe wins Wimbledon
5. **1953** Everest conquered, Hogan wins three golfing majors
6. **1941** DiMaggio's baseball hitting streak, Whirlaway wins US racing's Triple Crown
7. **1908** US wins half the track golds at London Olympics; Jack Johnson wins heavyweight title
8. **1930** Bobby Jones achieves golf's only grand slam
9. **1966** *various US sporting achievements but no mention of* World Cup
10. **1958** Palmer wins Masters, Sugar Ray Robinson wins sixth title, Pelé
11. **1924** Nurmi wins five Olympic golds; Tilden takes fifth US Open
12. **1969** NY Jets are surprise winners of Super Bowl; New York 'Miracle' Mets win baseball World Series

● Honourable mentions: **1982, 1927**



هكذا من الأصل

SAILING

British bid to secure funding for Olympics

By Edward Gorman, Sailing Correspondent

BRITAIN'S Olympic hopefuls face their first big test in the build-up to the *Sydney Games* in 2000 starting today, as seven of the nine Olympic classes hold concurrent world championships at the Worlds '99 regatta in Melbourne.

The event, one of the biggest *world-class* dinghy and keelboat regattas staged with a total of 16 classes *holding* world championships, is being treated by Royal Yachting Association coaches as a significant yardstick on the road to Sydney. Britain has more than 60 sailors taking part.

Good performances in Melbourne are *essential* for all-important funding in the run-up to the national Olympic trials a year from now. A top-ten finish will be required to qualify for "elite" Sports Council funding, while anywhere in the top 20 guarantees "international" class funding, which is about a third as much. Among Britain's top contenders are Ben Ainslie, in Lasers, who is seeking to add a world championship to his European title in August and his victory at the ISAF world sailing championships last *March*.

Melbourne will feature the *start* of a *battle between five* British pairings in the new 49er, two-man skiff. Ian Barker, the national champion, will sail with Daniel Phillips while Paul Brotherton and Neal McDonald, the European champions, will also be competing. Andy and *Ian Budgen, who were* runners-up at the last world championships, *will* be *in action* along with the combinations of Tim Robinson and Ian Walker, and Ado Stead and Zeb Elliot.

Clipper details 49

Of the five, Robinson and Walker perhaps are under the biggest pressure to produce a top-three finish. Whatever the *outcome, pairings may* be shuffled in the class after this regatta.

In Solings, Andy Beadsworth, of Britain, sailing with Barry Parkin and Richard Sydenham, will be looking to put in another strong performance after his win in this class at the *Sydney International* regatta last month. Among the opposition will be Lawrie Smith, who has teamed up with his 1992 Olympic bronze medal-winning crew, Ossie Stewart and Rob Cruickshank.

Another solid display will be expected *from Iain Percy in* Finns. He is one of the leading sailors in this class after his third place at the European championships and a seventh at the last world championships. *Shirley* Robertson returns in the Europe class and will be looking to go one *better than her second place* at the last world championships.

In the Around Alone Race, Mike Garside, of Britain, who started the second leg well, has seen his race go from bad to worse. Crossing the Tasman Sea, he lost out heavily to the Class 2 leader, J. P. Mouligne on *Cray Valley*, who reached Auckland on Saturday. To compound matters *he is now* losing even more miles to *Brad van Liew, of the United* States, who has brought *Balance Bar* alongside Garside's *Magellan Alpha*, having earlier been more than 400 miles adrift.

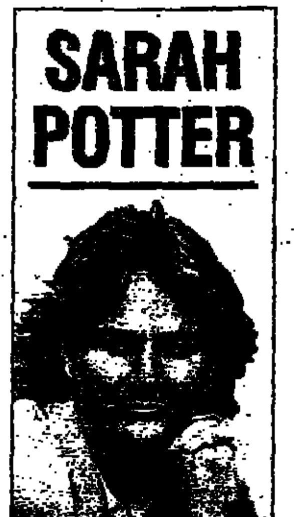
Yesterday the Briton still had more than 600 miles to go, but was travelling at a speed of just one *knot*. At Cape Town, in South Africa, he was *only a day behind Mouligne*, but yesterday he was estimating the gap could be as much as 12 days by the time he finally reaches Auckland.



Brentnall takes up family business

Derby County and Derbyshire employ an unusual double act

SARAH POTTER



When Derby County Football Club kicked into life in 1884 as an offshoot of the neighbouring Derbyshire County Cricket Club, none of the founder members could have imagined that, a century later, seasons without boundaries and *full-blown* professionalism would make playing links im*possible. Now, however*, an unusual family partnership is providing a common bond.

Ann Brentnall has been the physiotherapist at the county cricket club for 12 years. This weekend, in recognition of her growing stature, she leaves with the England A *squad for an eight-week tour* of Zimbabwe and South Africa. Helen Brentnall, her daughter, 21, has been a masseuse at Derby County FC for three seasons.

"After I'd done a fitness and sports therapy course in Bath, I came back to Derby to work *in a gym, taking aerobics* classes and circuit training," Helen Brentnall said. "Then Mum asked me to do some work on the cricketers, using my massage skills, because the physios there were snowed under. Derby County were in the same *situation and* telephoned the cricket club to ask for help. I started at the Baseball Ground in 1996 and was made full-time at the beginning of this season."

> 'You can prevent a lot of injuries'

Entering such a *closeted male environment* did not intimidate her. "Mum used to take me, my brother and sister to the cricket, where we'd sit and play cards in the dressing-rooms," she said. "All the players would be milling around, so we grew up around professional men's sport. *I've never experienced* any discrimination and *Derby wouldn't have hired* me if they had doubted that a woman could work here. When I started, I never thought: 'Oh, God, look at all these footballers!' It just seemed *normal*."

After Jim Smith, the Derby manager, insisted this season that she should be included in the official team photographs, Brentnall *might have to get* used to some inquisitive questioning from eagle-eyed supporters. "All my friends know what I do," she said, "but if someone came up to me in the pub, I wouldn't tell them because the usual response is: 'How much is it for extras?' "

Yet *there* is nothing shady about being a sports masseuse. "*There's a big demand* for it now," Brentnall said. "*Injury prevention* has become very important in football. I work alongside Peter Melville and Neil Sillit, the physios, and Dane Farrell, the fitness coach. The players all *had* body tests *at the start of the season* to identify their *weak spots* and it's my job to work on those. Obviously, we have all the high-tech new machinery, but massage has its place, *too. You* can prevent a lot of *injuries* by *keeping muscles* elastic."

In which case, the enigmatic Paulo Wanchope, the Costa Rica striker, who has legs as supple as rubber bands, is the running, jumping advert for her work. "The players have told me I'm not allowed to *talk about them*," *Brentnall* said, "but, yes, Wanchope's *legs are very long and he's* quite brilliant. The fans get frustrated sometimes, but everyone is glad he came over to play for us. There are a couple of real jokers in the team, but there isn't one of them who won't have a laugh."

The level of banter bouncing around at the training ground is no mean achieve*ment, given that* cosmopolitan Derby can also field two Spaniards, two Italians, an Argentinian, an Estonian, a Dane, a Norwegian and a German. "*It doesn't make any dif*ference to me," Brentnall said, "because they all speak good English. Jim Smith involves everybody and always makes training interesting. He's one of the greats in the game. It's not so easy for the cook, though, because she has to try and cater for everybody."

According to Brentnall, *every job at the club is easy if* the team is winning. "Premiership football is very intense and the pressure comes from everywhere," she said. "The *press hammer you, even if* you have a couple of bad games, and then everybody feels low. Fortunately, I've never seen it where we're really struggling and this season the fans seem happy that we have made a steady start." Derby are also in the fourth round of the FA Cup.

Those supporters were not *universally cheerful when the* club moved its goalposts to a new, purpose-built stadium in 1997. Some of the players also had concerns.

"*A lot were worried that the* atmosphere wouldn't be as good because the Baseball Ground was so compact," Brentnall said, "but Pride Park is amazing and last month the final corner was finished, so it now holds 37,000. The facilities are fantastic and there's always a real buzz on match days, so I think the *emotion of the move passed* quite quickly. You have to appreciate history, but everyone realises this is a growing club that is looking to the future."



Helen Brentnall holds the fortunes of Derby County's footballers in her hands

GOLF

Pabari out to prove Rye serial winner

By John Hopkins, Golf Correspondent

IT WAS no surprise that one of the first figures on the course at Rye yesterday was Neil Pabari. The tall, elegant swinger of a club, who has such an outstanding short game, was keen to *familiarise* himself again with the course on which he won the President's Putter last January.

By lunchtime on a glorious spring-like day, Pabari had put almost all the finishing touches to his preparations for his attempt to win the Putter again. "*It takes a bit of time to* reacquaint oneself with links golf," Pabari, a member at Sale Golf Club, said. "I came down and played at Royal St George's yesterday just to get in the mood. The course here is very soft. *That is very unusual at Rye. It calls for a different style of golf.*"

Conditions yesterday morning as competitors gathered for the 72nd President's Putter, which starts today, mirrored those of one year ago, when Pabari defeated Jamie Warman by 2 and 1, *holing* from 15 feet for a two on the 17th to settle *matters*. But if conditions were similar, Pabari's game was not.

In the past year his handicap has improved from two to plus one and after a successful summer's marauding, during which *he won six events on the* amateur circuit in the North West, *he went close to winning* a place for would-be professionals at the final qualifying school in Spain in November. At the first pre-qualifying event, where 120 players competed for eight or nine places, Pabari failed by one stroke to be among that select number. *He* continued to practise hard and at the second pre-qualify*ing event he missed out* by three strokes.

Someone mischievous appears to have been at work with the draw. Placed together in the bottom quarter are men as distinguished as Charlie Rotheroe, who won in 1996 and 1997, Pabari and Steve Seman, the winner *in 1994*, not to mention a few other *extremely potent players such* as Richard Sanders, the runner-up in 1993, Omar Malik, the Cambridge captain last year, and Warman.

FOOTBALL

Taxmen put Portsmouth in the dock

By Russell Kempson

THE financial crisis surrounding *Portsmouth* deepened yesterday when the Inland Revenue issued a winding-up order in the High Court claiming unpaid taxes of £435,000. If the debt is not settled before a scheduled court appearance on February 3, the Nationwide League first *division club could* be forced out of business.

Portsmouth's parent company, Blue Star Garages, was served this week with a winding-up petition by Try Build, the construction firm that built the new Fratton End stand at Fratton Park 18 months ago. *Try Build claims* that it is owed more than £400,000 and its petition is due to be heard in the High Court on January 20.

A spokesman for the Inland Revenue said: "Generally speaking, we try to come to some arrangement with anyone who has tax owing. Taking out winding-up petitions or *bankruptcy proceedings* is a last resort."

Portsmouth are an estimated £5 million in debt and losing £5,000 a day. Martin Gregory, the former chairman, is *attempting* to sell his 97 per cent shareholding to a consortium headed by Warren Smith, a businessman.

Les Parris, the new chairman, held discussions yesterday with Gregory and representatives of the consortium and said: "Progress has been made, but it's not like selling a secondhand car. You don't just turn up, say you *like it* and drive away."

Coventry City *yesterday* signed Morten Hyldgaard, 20, a 6ft 5in *Danish* goalkeeper, but he must complete the season *with Ikast*, his club in Denmark, before reporting to *Highfield* Road in July for pre-season training.

Espen Baardsen, the Tottenham Hotspur goalkeeper, has *signed* a new five-year contract that will keep him at White Hart Lane until the end of June 2004.

Houllier hints at new Evans role

By Stephen Wood

GERARD Houllier, the Liverpool manager, yesterday extended a hand of friendship to Roy Evans, who enabled the Frenchman to take sole charge by leaving the club. In trying to soften the blow, Houllier indicated that he would be happy for Evans to return to work at Anfield.

Evans had served Liverpool *for* 35 years, on the playing and coaching staff, before he decided to swallow his pride and stepped aside as joint manager, breaking up an experiment that lasted for four months, but had backfired much sooner.

The split from Liverpool was an emotional one for Evans, while Houllier has *overseen a mini-revival* in Liverpool's fortunes recently and *is attempting* to keep the feel-good factor around Anfield.



Houllier: overseen revival

"If Roy wants to return and work with us, be it in the scouting or recruiting of top players, then I would be very happy," Houllier said. "There is also the youth academy to oversee, a very important role. There is no doubt that Roy would be a good addition, in whatever capacity."

Evans was offered a scouting role when *he left* Anfield in November, but turned it down in *favour of a clean break*. Since his departure, he has rested and taken on some *work in the media. However*, he has never indicated that he wanted to leave the game for good, and never declared that he had terminated his association with Liverpool.

It is believed that he would relish a return to the coaching side, but it is unlikely that any such *opportunity* is being made available by Houllier, who made the point yesterday: "A job at Liverpool does not just involve working with the players in the first team."

The return of Evans would be welcomed around the club, for he was a popular servant. *Evans, however, shouldered* most of the blame for the failure of his partnership with Houllier and may wish for more time to put the episode behind him.

Thierry Bonalair, the Nottingham Forest *midfield* player, and Horacio Carbon*ari, the Derby County defender*, have been charged with misconduct by the Football Association.

Bonalair, the Frenchman, allegedly was involved in an altercation with members of the Sheffield Wednesday management team during Forest's 3-2 defeat at Hillsborough on December 7. Carbonari, an Argentinian, is accused of inciting the crowd during *Derby's 2-2 draw at Forest on* November 16, in which the *defender scored a 72nd-minute* equaliser.

Both players have 14 days to respond to the charges and have the option of requesting personal hearings.

Stevenage Borough, of the Football Conference, yesterday appointed Richard Hill as their manager in succession to Paul Fairclough, who was dismissed before Christmas.

Hill, 35, was assistant manager to John Gregory for 15 months at Wycombe Wanderers. The highlight *of his* playing career was scoring 29 goals in Northampton Town's promotion-winning season *from the third division in* 1986-87. Hill also played for Watford and Oxford United.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Showpiece events avert clash

■ **SPORTS POLITICS:** The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Fifa, the world governing body of football, agreed yesterday not to compete against each *other*.

The possibility of the world's two biggest sporting events — the Olympic Games and the World Cup — being held in the same year arose after Sepp Blatter, the president of Fifa, announced last weekend that he wanted *the World Cup to be held* every two years instead of four. But he and Juan Antonio Samaranch, the IOC president, agreed that it would be financial disaster for them to compete against each other. "There would be no winners, only losers," *Samaranch said*.

■ **SKI JUMPING: Janne *Ahonen*, of Finland, the world champion, won the Four Hills Tour by finishing second to Andreas Winhoelzl, of Austria, with 255.9 points in the last of the series at Bischofshofen yesterday. Ahonen extended his overall World Cup lead over Martin Schmitt, of Germany, to 115 points.**

■ **RUGBY UNION:** David Humphreys has won his fitness battle and will captain Ulster in their European Cup semi-final against Stade Francais at Ravenhill on Saturday. The Ireland stand-off suffered a shoulder injury late on in the quarter-final victory over Toulouse, the 1996 European champions, last month.

■ **REAL TENNIS: Great Britain, the holders, will meet Australia in the final of the Bathurst Cup, the *international team event for amateur players*, in Hobart, Tasmania, *after taking a* winning 3-0 lead in their *semi-final against the* United States. Australia beat France 5-0.**

Sheehan on Bridge

By Robert Sheehan, Bridge Correspondent

The Tredinnick twins had a disaster sitting East-West on this hand, *from* the 1998 Premier League. But there is one aspect of the deal in which they emerge with credit.

Dealer East ***Love all*** ***IMPs***

North: ♠ A 4 3 ♡ Q 9 8 7 4 ◇ 10 9 3 ♣ Q 8

West: ♠ 8 6 5 ♡ J 3 2 ◇ A 8 6 5 ♣ A 3 2

East: ♠ 7 ♡ – ◇ Q J 7 4 2 ♣ K J 10 9 7 5 4

South: ♠ K Q J 10 9 2 ♡ A K 10 6 5 ◇ K ♣ 6

W	N	E	S
–	–	4 C	4 S
5 C	Double	Pass	6 S
Pass	Pass	Double	All Pass

Contract: Six Spades Doubled, by South. Lead: ace of diamonds.

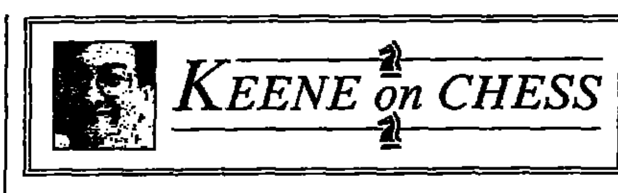
North's double showed some high cards, rather than being out-and-out penalty. East's double of Six Spades merely showed a defensive trick, and *did not have* any special significance in requesting an unusual lead. If it had been a Lightner double, the disaster would not have occurred.

West led the ace of diamonds, and East played the queen. Presumably East intended that as a suit preference signal for a switch to hearts. West *could* see that playing the ace of clubs *would be wrong if East had* started with an eight-card *suit, so decided that the best* chance was that the queen of diamonds was a singleton. He continued with a second round of the suit, allowing declarer to ruff away East's jack and later discard his club on the nine of diamonds.

At the other table McNair opened Five Clubs on the East hand, South bid Five Spades, Rees bid Six Clubs and North doubled, again "*card-showing*". *That was* passed out, and later McNair judged well to lead a low diamond on the first round of the suit, for a double slam swing.

And what was the good thing to be said for East-West at the first table? East must have played the queen of diamonds in tempo, or if he *did* not, West took no advantage from any fumble. *Many pairs would make it* quite clear by hesitant carding that the queen of diamonds was a suit-preference signal, not a singleton.

☐ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.



Keene on Chess

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

Sokolov ahead

With two rounds to go in the Hastings Premier tournament, Britain's top all-play-all, Ivan Sokolov has a firm grip on the lead. In the seventh round, he strengthened his position with a decisive victory against Tony Miles, of Great Britain.

White: Ivan Sokolov

Black: Tony Miles

Hastings Premier 1999

Queen's Gambit Accepted

1	d4	d5
2	c4	dxc4
3	e3	Nf6
4	Bxc4	e6
5	Nf3	c5
6	Qe2	a6
7	dxc5	Bxc5
8	0-0	b5
9	Bd3	Nc6
10	Nbd2	0-0
11	Ne4	Be7
12	Nxf6+	Bxf6
13	Qc2	Nb4
14	Bxh7+	Kh8
15	Qb3	Kxh7
16	Qxb4	Bb7
17	Qg4	Rc8
18	e4	Rc4
19	Re1	Qa8
20	Nd2	Rd4
21	f3	Qa7
22	Kh1	Kg8
23	Nf1	Rc4
24	Be3	Qb8
25	Bf4	Be5
26	Bxe5	Qxe5
27	Ne3	Rc5
28	b3	Rfc8
29	Qg3	Qb2
30	Rad1	Qxa2
31	Ng4	R5c7
32	Nf6+	Kf8
33	Qd6+	Re7
34	Qd8+	Re8
35	Qd6+	Re7
36	Nd7+	Ke8
37	Nb6	Black resigns

Diagram of final position

White: *Laurent Fressinet*

Black: James Plaskett

Hastings Premier 1999

Sicilian Defence

1	e4	c5
2	Nf3	Nc6
3	d4	cxd4
4	Nxd4	e6
5	Nc3	Qc7
6	Be3	a6
7	Bd3	b5
8	f4	Bb7
9	Nb3	Nf6
10	0-0	d6
11	Qf3	Be7
12	Qh3	Rc8
13	a3	b4
14	axb4	Nxb4
15	Nd4	0-0
16	Ra4	Nxd3
17	cxd3	Rfe8
18	Nde2	Qd7
19	Ra5	e5
20	Qg3	Bd8
21	Raa1	exf4
22	Nxd4	d5
23	exd5	Bxd5
24	Rxa6	Ba8
25	Kh1	Qb7
26	Ra7	Qxb2
27	Bd4	Qb4
28	Rd7	Kf8
29	Nh5	Nxd7
30	Bxg7+	Ke7
31	Re1+	Ne5
32	Qxe5+	Black resigns

☐ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

TOTO
a. Altogether
b. A wild dance
c. A louse

URKEY
a. A bird
b. A code
c. A game

WARI
a. A cry of "cave"
b. Another bird
c. A game

SHUNGA
a. A temporary camp
b. Dirty pictures
c. A ju-jitsu move

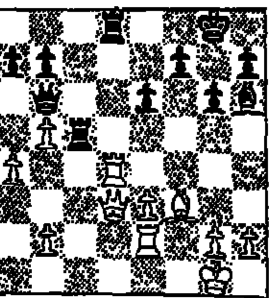
Answers on page 50

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Anic — Georgadze, Solin 1998.

White appears to be well centralised but there is, in fact, a *serious weakness in his* position. How did Black uncover this?



Solution on page 50

RUGBY UNION: OWNER OF WORCESTER TO TAKE LEGAL ACTION IF HIS CLUB ARE DENIED PROMOTION BY PROPOSED ANGLO-WELSH LEAGUE

Disgruntled Duckworth is ready for battle

By Mark Souster and David Hands


Duckworth: unhappy

HOPES that Brian Baister, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) chairman, could soon be holding aloft a piece of paper proclaiming peace in our time, may prove premature despite the endorsement of the RFU, on Tuesday night, of a two-division Anglo-Welsh structure next season. With the continued success of the Allied Dunbar Premiership, a growing body of opinion in England is questioning the wisdom of, and need for, a cross-border competition. Legal challenges have not been ruled out.

Cecil Duckworth, the owner of Worcester, is among the doubters. He believes that for political and financial expediency on the part of a handful of leading clubs anxious to extricate themselves from a situation of their own making, the English game is being "railroaded" into formal links with Wales without proper consultation or consensus.

"Why do we need Wales?" Duckworth asked yesterday. "We have a healthy domestic structure that is flourishing. We don't want to be a dog in the manger and I do not want to be destructive, but at the moment we seem to be negotiating in a vacuum. I think Brian Baister is unnecessarily obsessed with the belief that this is the only way of solving the Welsh decline."

He added: "To get the big clubs out of a hole, the same clubs who went behind the back of the RFU to play the rebel games against Cardiff and Swansea, we are forced to have an Anglo-Welsh league. The proposals appear to be at the expense of English clubs and that takes a bit of understanding."

Duckworth has signalled his intention to resort to law if he feels Worcester are unfairly discriminated against by being denied promotion. As things stand, it is understood that the proposed two divisions would each consist of 14 clubs. The first would probably comprise 12 clubs from the Allied Dunbar Premiership first division and two Welsh sides. The second division would probably be made up of eight English teams and six Welsh.

Duckworth is angered at the disdainful manner in which those outside the elite are being treated. He is also annoyed by suggestions that second division clubs might be offered a "financial sweetener" to secure their acquiescence.

"How can they talk of consensus when we haven't been consulted? I am not going to be bought off," Duckworth, who is worth an estimated £200 million, said. "Anyway, we all signed up to the Mayfair Agreement so we can't just be cut off on a whim for convenience sake. The agreement guarantees clubs in our division £250,000 each over three years. Do you think those hard-up clubs would would vote that away?"

He has canvassed the bottom clubs in the first division, as well as those in the second, and says the majority share his view. With a deadline of January 31, writs are the last thing the union, whose management board meet today to consider the proposals of the leading clubs, would want. But Duckworth said he would follow that route if necessary. As it is, he said he had been advised that the legal document between English First Division Rugby and Cardiff and Swansea is not binding and could be jettisoned.

However, there is optimism that the meeting of the general committee of the Welsh Rugby Union tonight will presage an end to hostilities with Cardiff and Swansea, the breakaway clubs, thereby easing the way for the creation of an Anglo-Welsh league. In a quid pro quo the clubs have offered to drop litigation against the union, in return for the payment of £400,000 of television money withheld from last season.

But central to the debate will be whether the WRU will recognise the unofficial series being played by Cardiff and Swansea — who meet each other on Saturday — against the leading English clubs. If they do, then it would obviate the need for the fines imposed last month at the insistence of the International Rugby Board, the existence of which remains a bone of contention.

Leicester handed breathing space

By David Hands
Rugby Correspondent

"I CAN'T see Leicester losing another four games," a disgruntled Northampton follower sniffed after hearing Ian McGeechan predict that the winner of the Allied Dunbar Premiership this season could lose seven or eight times. Leicester remain in the driving seat after a topsy-turvy Tuesday night demonstrated yet again the competitiveness of the first division.

Leicester are one of only two clubs — Harlequins are the other — to have played 14 matches. Their catching-up will come later this month, but Northampton, who lost their chance to go top when they went down 32-8 in their first Premiership match at Franklin's Gardens for nearly six weeks, have played 15, Wasps and Saracens 16.

It was a case of the sorcerer being outdone by his apprentices as McGeechan, director of rugby to Northampton and coach to the British Isles on their past three tours, was undermined by two of his Lions assistants, Dick Best and Andy Keast.

Best, director of rugby to London Irish, praised Keast as "one of the best backs coaches in the world" after a masterful display of defensive organisation and attacking accuracy that left Northampton losing by five tries to one. Despite dominating, in terms of possession and territory, Northampton were forced sideways time and again, turning over ball to Jake Boer and Kieron Dawson, the outstanding Irish flankers.

"Andy instils confidence in players in training and, probably for the first time, we saw players exuding that confidence," Best said. This, on a muddy pitch against a heavier pack, was a definitive Irish performance, crowned with four tries by Niall Woods on his first senior appearance since November 21.

Meanwhile, the sun shone on Bath yesterday to mark the end of their worst period of league rugby. A breathless 32-30 win at Sale the previous night terminated a sequence of six successive defeats and there is unlikely to be much change to the XV that will play Newcastle in the fourth-round Tetley's Bitter Cup tie on Saturday. Jonathan Callard, who withdrew with a chest infection, is in the clear after an X-ray, but Matt Perry may well remain at full back.

London Scottish's 24-13 win over Gloucester moves them above Sale in the bottom four, but nothing will go right for Bedford. They led Newcastle 23-5 at half-time but conceded three tries in the last three minutes of proper time to go down 34-23 and remain just above West Hartlepool in the basement.

PAUL COUSANS


Smith, left, the Sedgley Park captain, and Jason Ashcroft will be key figures for the Manchester club when they take on Wasps in the cup on Saturday

Sedgley prepare rough ride off the beaten track

Christopher Irvine on a Lancashire welcome awaiting Wasps in the Tetley's Bitter Cup

After a cup defeat at Orrell in the Seventies, Harlequins coined the phrase about being mugged "in a lay-by off the M6". Sedgley Park, of the Jewson League second division north, are intent on ambushing Wasps on the hard shoulder. The roar of the adjacent M60 in north Manchester will be drowned out on Saturday by a 3,000 full house for their Tetley's Bitter Cup fourth-round tie.

Black pudding and curry stalls are promised and the Parkfield Inn is putting on extra helpings of its famous Lancashire hotpot. "The Wasps supporters will get their own bar with watered-down beer at £2.80 to make them feel at home," John Lawrence, Park's press officer, joked.

The Portugal and Namibia supporters' branches will be there for the biggest day in Park' s 67-year history, plus the unveiling of a clubhouse extension, thanks to a £600,000 lottery grant. With a fitness centre and function room, facilities at their aptly-named Park Lane home shame many senior clubs.

Their £75,000 playing and coaching budget is substantially less than Lawrence Dallaglio's wage at Wasps. The last England captain to get his comeuppance was Bill Beaumont, who went on an England training session confident his Fylde side would beat Park in the Lancashire Cup. Until now, that 1978 upset was the club's proudest moment, along with the first of six England caps won by Tony Bond, an ex-Sedgley boy, the same year.

After several lean years in north west division one, Sedgley's rise can be traced to the acquisition in 1993 of two former Orrell stalwarts, Ken Fletcher, as coach, and Bob Kimmins as captain (Andy Kimmins now fills the boots of his brother at lock, after Bob's retirement from the game). Promotion in three successive seasons triggered widespread interest, especially in junior and women's rugby.

Sitting in the splendid new clubhouse, David Smith, the Park chairman, relished the visit of a Wasps side containing a dozen internationals. "We've already beaten a team one league ahead of us (Manchester) and another two leagues ahead (Blackheath), so why not a third? They're 15 fellas the same as us, who just get paid a bit more," he said. Smith is among 70 unpaid volunteers who help operate 22 teams. "I'm not being rude to Sale down the road, but they've got a first team and development XV. Some bigger clubs are killing participation to concentrate on paying a professional elite. We've 400 men, women and children playing the game and the more we get, the healthier we become.

"How many big clubs can say that they don't owe a penny? Everything here's paid for. It helps having a treasurer who makes Scrooge look like Father Christmas. We're ambitious and we'll bust a gut, but not the club, to get into the Premiership. There's a niche for clubs like ours to do well higher up the league ladder on a semi-pro basis."

Sedgley, who recently won a sports club of the year award from the Central Council for Physical Recreation, are utterly professional in their outlook. They have an exchange link with New Zealand clubs in the Bay of Plenty, in which their most recent recruit, Rob Moon, 22, at fly half, is capable of giving Alex King a rough ride.

While players such as Mark Appleson, the former Scotland B wing, and Jason and Paul Ashcroft, the back-row forwards and sons of Alan Ashcroft, the England and British Isles No 8 of the Fifties, will be known to Wasps, the nucleus of the Sedgley team is homegrown, such as Rob Smith, 26, the scrum half and captain, whose immediate priority, as site engineer during the building work, is laying tarmacadam for additional parking.

"We won't be overawed," he said. "We'll have the biggest crowd we've ever had behind us and we've nothing to lose. They'll probably expect to win by 50 points. There's no such thing as a good loss, but Wasps will know all about Sedgley Park after Saturday."


Sedgley Park forwards get down to the hard graft of preparing to face the mighty Wasps pack, which includes Dallaglio, the England captain

RFU braces itself for comeback by Brittle

RUMOURS that Cliff Brittle was planning a comeback on the Rugby Football Union (RFU) council have been scotched, at least for now. After six months in exile, Brittle was reportedly getting itchy feet and his supporters were allegedly hoping to persuade Malcolm Duncan to stand down as the Staffordshire representative on the council in favour of Brittle, the former RFU chairman, who lost his job last July. Roy Smith, the secretary of Staffordshire, which has long been Brittle's power-base, denied that there was any truth in the reports. "When we heard, we were alarmed, not so much at the prospect of Cliff returning but more of losing Malcolm, who has done a tremendous job." Elections take place soon and nominations close in a fortnight. Duncan, who has the full backing of the committee, is the only candidate . . . so far.

Boxing clever

The three big players in the televising of rugby are due at Twickenham on Tuesday in a move designed to herald closer working relations between clubs and broadcasters. At the invitation of English Rugby Partnership, Mike Miller, the BBC head of sport, Mark Sharman, who was recently installed at Channel 4 as Miller's replacement, and Martin Turner, the rugby producer from BSkyB, will address officials, directors of rugby and marketing directors about ways of promoting the game and raising its profile. The BBC and Channel 4 signed deals recently to broadcast English domestic rugby.

Better bets

Fancy a flutter in 1999? Sporting Index are quoting the following odds: England to win the Five Nations Championship and the World Cup, 20-1; France to do likewise, 16-1. New Zealand and South Africa are a best-priced 6-1 to do the tri-nations-World Cup double, with Australia at 12-1.


Brittle: any comeback may face opposition

LOOSE TALK
e-mail: sport@the-times.co.uk

Kiernan stays

The black art of the spin doctor appears to be creeping into rugby. At least, that is Tom Kiernan's interpretation of reports that he and Roger Pickering, the tournament director of the European Cup, were on the verge of resigning. As much as some English clubs might wish this, Kiernan, the European Rugby Cup chairman, says that there is no truth in the rumours, which he believes emanated from someone not far removed from English First Division Rugby.

Pitch battle

The subject of dodgy grounds takes us to Thomond Park, Limerick, venue for the famous Munster mugging of the 1978 All Blacks. That milestone was to have been celebrated last October at the European Cup match between Munster and Perpignan, but the tie had to be switched to Cork because the pitch was unplayable. Two months on, the surface still resembles a bog and Shannon, co-tenants with Bohemians, have no ground at which to play their home league matches. Blame is being laid at the door of the Irish Rugby Football Union, which bought Thomond Park from the Munster branch but whose £30,000 investment in a new main pitch is months behind schedule.

Tasty solution

Marius Hurter, the Newcastle and former South Africa prop forward, is not a believer in creatine to build himself up. Ice-cream does the trick for him. Hurter eats two litres of rum and raisin every day and, when supplies ran short recently, a local firm stepped in and Hurter scooped a unique sponsorship deal that keeps his fridge full.

MARK SOUSTER

Tournament gives lift to leading clubs

WITH *The Times* Trophy now into the quarter-final stage, the quality and excitement of the rugby continues to grow (Michael Aylwin writes). All the indications are that the tournament will represent an improvement on last year, which was itself noticeable for some remarkable rugby from Toulouse, the winners, who then provided Xavier Garbojosa to France's grand slam-winning Five Nations Championship team.

The virtues of the tournament as an academy for young talent is undoubted and, with this in mind, several first-class rugby institutions have given their backing. The Irish RFU has invested £15,000 in the tournament and the Welsh have also provided assistance.

In England, clubs such as London Scottish, Richmond, Saracens and Leicester have numerous youngsters representing their universities in the competition. Malcolm Pearce, the new chairman of Bristol, has invested £2,500 in the tournament and his club enjoy close liaisons with Bristol University.

Bob Reeves, student representative on the Rugby Football Union, and director of rugby at Bristol University, is delighted with the rising profile of *The Times* Trophy, which is now in its second year, and hopes that it will soon receive investment from his own union.

TOM HEVEZI


Cairns, of Brunel University, gets the ball away to set up another attack in *The Times* Trophy victory at Richmond

Brunel engineer tense triumph

Brunel University 18
University College Dublin .. 16

By Michael Aylwin



THE emotions of both camps were put through the mill, as the first quarter-final of *The Times* Trophy ticked down to its conclusion yesterday. The Richmond Athletic Ground provided the venue, and Richmond and London Scottish, the co-tenants, provided several of the players for a Brunel team that snatched victory from the clutches of University College Dublin (UCD) before they, in turn, nearly snatched it back again at the death.

It had been a frustrating match until it burst into life in the seventieth minute. Brunel controlled the first half, registering a try through Steve Pearce, but a flurry from UCD saw Jacob Smith skip over just before the break to secure the Irishmen a 13-8 lead.

When Brian O'Driscoll then kicked a penalty in the 53rd minute to stretch UCD's lead to eight points, it seemed that the conquerors of Toulouse, last season's champions, would continue their dominance of the tournament.

Brunel's passes, however, began to stick and, inspired by their Saracens contingent, who were playing in front of the watching Mark Evans, Saracens' director of rugby, they fought back.

Brilliant handling skill from Matt Cairns, the hooker from Saracens, released Ed Smith, whose chip and chase laid on a try for Rob Hart after 70 minutes that sparked a frantic finale. Five minutes later, a quickly-taken penalty and subsequent interplay between Matt Powell, Chris Davis and Tony Rocques, all on Saracens' books, created the ruck from which Smith went over.

The drama was far from over, however. In the fifth minute of injury time, Philip Bredin was worked clear, but a thumping tackle from Rocques sent him into touch. The referee, however, deemed the tackle high and awarded UCD the penalty that could have won them the game. Peter Maughan yielded to the inevitable pressure and pulled his kick wide.

SCORERS: Brunel: Tries: Pearce (20 min), Hart (70), Smith (75). Penalty goal: Smith (36). UCD: Try: Smith (40). Conversion: O'Driscoll. Penalty goals: O'Driscoll 2 (34, 53). Dropped goal: O'Driscoll (30). Scoring sequence (Brunel first): 5-0, 5-3, 5-6, 8-6, 8-13 (half-time), 8-16, 13-16, 18-16.
BRUNEL UNIVERSITY: D Walsh (rep: B Matthew, 75min); E Smith, D Rumney, C Davis, J Barrington (rep: R Glover, 70); M Powell, S Pearce; G Powell, M Cairns, R Bell, B Glossop (rep: H Head, 40; rep: S Justice, 75), A Rocques, D MacFadyean, J Barfoot.
UCD: P Bredin; S Doggett (rep: D Kearney, 77), M Colling, S Moore, J Smith, B O'Driscoll (rep: P Maughan, 72), C Scully, M Monagh, D Blaney, R McCormack, C Keane, D Broughall, J Shine, G Cantwell, C Leyden.
Referee: L Jackson (London).

هكذا من الأصل

Tour manager says English domestic cricket needs to be harder and leaner

Gooch calls on players for greater dedication

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN SYDNEY

SELFISH counties and lazy players. Graham Gooch did not spell it out quite so frankly when he assessed England's performance in the Ashes series, that ended on Tuesday with a 3-1 win for Australia, but he left his audience in no doubt that English cricket suffered from two deeply-rooted maladies that required prompt treatment before a strong national team could emerge.

These things have been said before, and will be said again, but the latest defeat against England's oldest rivals gave Gooch a platform to be heard, and he used it. Without speaking too harshly of the players he has supervised in his position as tour manager, Gooch reiterated what he has felt for many years — that English cricket is too soft to produce a regular supply of Test-class performers.

Did the counties want to contribute to a strong Test team, he asked, and did the players themselves want to become bona fide international cricketers? He also suggested that overseas players were taking money out of the game that could be invested more wisely in the development of young players.

"I think that most county cricketers, if asked, would say they aspired to play for England," Gooch said, "but do they know what they have to sacrifice in order to do it? It won't happen just because they have a bit of talent. We can put all sorts of people round them, coaches to help them hone their skills, and make them more rounded people, but the drive must come from within."

If that was a coded message to members of this party who have not excelled and one or two others who failed to make the cut, it was also a warning that England expects a good deal more from young players than they seem prepared to offer. The problem, as Gooch admitted, is that the best players were here, with the possible exception of one or two bowlers.

County cricket, he pronounced, had to be "stronger and leaner. We need to develop our whole domestic game so that we produce better players so that when they come into the Test side, they are better equipped. If we can do that, then, long after I have gone, I think we will see the benefits when players filter through".

Despite England's customary defeat by Australia, Gooch thought that this team, under a coaching set-up headed by David Lloyd, was making progress, if slowly. He saw no purpose in changing faces at the top simply because England had lost another series, for the personnel on the field would remain essentially the same.

"The easiest thing to do is to remove the coach, but you can't remove the players and, by and large, most of them are the best we've got. David Lloyd has done a good job. The organisation is good but we've got to get our domestic cricket right.

"We proved in the last two Tests that we could play good cricket and compete with the best. The disappointing thing is that we hit our best form at the end of the series, which is too late. You need to play like that from the beginning

"I can't fault our guys for the way they have worked at their drills but we did not hang on to our catches. In the last couple of games we held them, and we saw the difference. You can't afford to put down good players, like Steve Waugh at Brisbane. If, in future, there is a marginal selection and one man is a better fielder, he will get the nod. We need to find good fielders, particularly in the close-catching areas".

On overseas players, he sounded quite bullish. "I would now question whether county cricket can afford to pay the money they are taking out of the game. If you are spending £100,000 on an overseas player, is that money well spent? It is not intended as a slight on those players, but are they giving value for money? "

When England return to Test cricket in the summer, against New Zealand, the selectors will have to try to resolve Alec Stewart's role. Released from the burden of keeping wicket for the last two Tests, he responded with some adventurous batting at the top of the order, including a century in Melbourne. "He gave a fresh impetus to the innings," Gooch, who will be one of those selectors, said. "Things change from series to series but he is more comfortable in that position. We really need to find a wicketkeeper who can bat at No 7 and find batsmen who can bowl on a regular basis."

After giving thanks to Bob Cottam, the bowling coach, for his work and emphasising that everything possible had been done for this group of players, Gooch had covered about everything. He will go home this week, leaving the management of the one-day part of the tour to David Graveney. But the sting is in the tail: how badly do the cricketers of England want to be Test players?

REBECCA NADEN



Gooch, the England manager, with Stewart on his right, offers his final thoughts on the Ashes series at the press conference yesterday

Woolmer poses no threat to Lloyd

Ivo Tennant says South Africa's coach is not interested in helping England

Bob Woolmer, the highly-respected South Africa coach, who would be a prime candidate to succeed David Lloyd in the same role for England, said yesterday that he had other plans in mind. Dennis Amiss, the chief executive of Warwickshire and a long-standing personal friend, has asked him if he would like to return to Birmingham, and he intends writing two books after the World Cup this summer.

"To coach another country immediately would almost be treacherous," Woolmer, a former England batsman, said in Cape Town yesterday. "Kerry Packer says that everybody has their price, but I shall need a break when my contract with South Africa ends in June. David Lloyd is a very good coach and England have a strong managerial set-up now, for which credit should be given to him and to Lord MacLaurin. I have not been contacted by the England and Wales Cricket Board.

"I am only really interested at the moment in the World Cup and will weigh up my options afterwards. Part-time work for the United Cricket Board of South Africa is one possibility and I have had other offers for 2000. As well as wanting a rest from the game, I would like a break from flying around the world on tours, which is hard on my wife and children in Cape Town," Woolmer said.

"So even if I go back to Warwickshire, I shall continue to live here. Besides, with the exchange rate as it is, I could not buy the garage of my house if it were in England. One of the reasons I came to live in South Africa was because my back stiffens up in cold weather.

"I only have to look at Table Mountain every day while remembering that the lights are turned on in England at 3.30 on a winter's afternoon to realise that this is where I want to be.

"My house overlooks the 15th hole of Mowbray golf course and I have joined the club so as to become part of another society and be able to escape from cricket. The crime, car bombs and Wild West shoot-outs in South Africa are obviously disturbing and there are wider political motives for them. But I wake up to blue skies here," he said.

Woolmer, 50, is contemplating becoming a self-employed consultant on the game. "I might set up something like 'Bob Woolmer Enterprises'," he said. "It is easy for me, as a coach, to see what is needed to make a team or a country successful. And I want to write books about the modern methods of coaching, including the science of the game, and on my experiences with the emerging South Africa, which Colin Cowdrey suggested I should write.

"I believe that if I continue to work here, I can help black South Africans understand what is needed to play Test cricket — how hard they need to work and the type of skills they require.

"The legacy of the past has to be addressed, but politicians here have to realise they cannot just pick a player off the street and put him in the national side. Test cricket is a game of skill and caps should not be given away.

"Politicians have to understand that they need to provide enough finance for the players to become good enough. The challenge for a coach is then to bring them up to standard. In the next ten years the make-up of South Africa's Test team could be 60-40 in favour of blacks. But planting two or three into the side who are not good enough might devalue the game," he said.

"If I go back to county cricket next year, I will be interested to see if two divisions in the championship can work. I have always expressed my reservations about it, but who is to say I am right? I hope it succeeds and that this brings in more money for players who are likely to have shorter spans at the top of the game."

Warne: stand-in captain

Shane Warne will captain Australia in the opening matches of the the tri-nations tournament against England in Brisbane on Sunday and Sri Lanka in Sydney next Wednesday in the absence of Steve Waugh, who has a hamstring injury. Warne led Australia against New Zealand last season when Waugh was injured.

Waugh will travel with the squad in order to oversee preparations for the World Cup in England in May, and to receive treatment. Once he is fit, one player will be dropped from the squad.

AUSTRALIA SQUAD: S R Waugh (captain), S K Warne (vice-captain), M G Bevan, G S Blewett, A C Dale, D W Fleming, A C Gilchrist, B P Julian, D S Lehmann, G D McGrath, D R Martyn, R T Ponting, M E Waugh, B E Young.

West Indies subside to another defeat

CAPE TOWN (final day of five): South Africa beat West Indies by 149 runs

THE professionalism and resolve that characterised West Indies cricket for 20 years is evident no more. Their lower order did bat with application yesterday, but this fourth Test match, like the previous three in the series, ended in ignominious defeat. Clive Lloyd, the tour manager, called their performances "abysmal".

In 1975-76, Lloyd was the captain who, after a 5-1 defeat by Australia, had the will to turn West Indies into the most powerful side in the world. Whether Brian Lara can make something of their present disarray must be in considerable doubt. "I am very unhappy," Lloyd said. "There are guys here who dominate our domestic cricket but who are not up to international standard."

Lloyd was especially critical of West Indies' batsmen. The lower order emphasised how good these conditions were by taking the overnight score of 93 for six to 271, their highest total of the series. True, Donald was not fit to bowl, but then neither was he when they collapsed on Tuesday.

There is one remaining Test in this series — West Indies

FROM IVO TENNANT IN CAPE TOWN

have never been beaten 5-0 — and there is scant time to find replacements before Australia come to the Caribbean in the spring or before the World Cup. With the exception of Jimmy Adams, who is injured, there is no obvious successor to Lara, who would not wish to play under another captain.

Of the lower order who kept South Africa in the field until shortly before 3pm, Jacobs made an unbeaten 69, his highest score in Test cricket. McLean contributed 39 in his exuberant way and Dillon 36 through strokes that suggested he deserves better than to go in last — but why could not Lara, Hooper, the openers and Chanderpaul play like this?

Given that he is 31, Jacobs is not exactly one for the future, yet his bat was admirably straight throughout his innings, which included ten fours. He might find himself moved up the order at Centurion Park, for it is difficult to see who else should open rather than him. He and Dillon added 64 for the last wicket, which, as with McLean's 39 off 49 balls that included three sixes and four fours, was diverting cricket.

Appropriately, it was Jacques Kallis who took the final wicket, his fifth of the innings. He is only the eighth cricketer to have achieved that, a century and a half-century in the same Test match. Sobers, Botham and Imran Khan are among those who have done so.

Bob Woolmer, the South Africa coach, believes Kallis could become one of the best players that South Africa has produced. He was, inevitably, named man of the match by Conrad Hunte.

■ Warwickshire have a verbal agreement with Allan Donald for the South Africa fast bowler to return to Edgbaston as overseas player for the 1999 season. The one-year deal is linked with a benefit in what will be Donald's tenth county campaign since 1987. Donald will replace Brian Lara as the Warwickshire overseas player after the West Indies batsman stood in for him and took over the county captaincy while Donald was on Test duty for South Africa last summer.

SCOREBOARD FROM CAPE TOWN

SOUTH AFRICA: First Innings 406-8 dec (D J Cullinan 168, J H Kallis 110).
Second Innings 226-7 dec (J H Kallis 88 not out, W J Cronje 54)

WEST INDIES: First Innings 212 (C L Hooper 86)

Second Innings

P A Wallace c Gibbs b Pollock	0
J R Murray lbw b Kallis	7
S Chanderpaul c Cullinan b Kallis	5
*B C Lara c and b Adams	33
C L Hooper b Kallis	20
D Ganga lbw b Pollock	16
† R D Jacobs not out	69
O D Gibson run out	13
N A M McLean c Adams b Kallis	39
C E L Ambrose c Kirsten b Adams	19
M Dillon c Cronje b Kallis	36
Extras (lb 2, nb 12)	14
Total	271

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-2, 2-7, 3-15, 4-47, 5-87, 6-87, 7-108, 8-173, 9-207.

BOWLING: Pollock 25-4-49-2; Kallis 27.4-4-90-5; Cronje 1-1-0-0; Terbrugge 11-4-40-0; Adams 23-5-80-2; Cullinan 4-1-10-0

Umpires: S Venkataraghavan (India) and D L Orchard.

Cairns ensures India prolong barren run

HAMILTON (final day of five): New Zealand drew with India

NEW ZEALAND won their home series against India after forcing a draw by compiling a formidable second innings score in the third and final Test yesterday. They took the series 1-0, leaving India without a victory away from the sub-continent in 19 Tests. Chris Cairns led the assault that put an Indian victory out of reach on the last day with a punishing 126. When Stephen Fleming declared at 464 for eight shortly after lunch, India were 414 runs behind and could only hope to stave off an unlikely defeat.

Their task was made easier after injuries to Dion Nash and Daniel Vettori forced New Zealand to take the field without two of their specialist bowlers. Rahul Dravid completed his second century of the match, making 103 not out and Saurav Ganguly was undefeated on 101.

SCOREBOARD

NEW ZEALAND: First Innings 366 (C D McMillan 92, R G Twose 87, M J Horne 63, J Srinath 5 for 95).

Second Innings

M D Bell lbw b Tendulkar	25
M J Horne c Mongia b Srinath	26
*S P Fleming b Prasad	18
R G Twose lbw b Tendulkar	4
C D McMillan c Mongia b Singh	84
† A C Parore c Singh b Kumble	50
C L Cairns c Dravid b Kumble	126
D J Nash run out	63
D L Vettori not out	43
Extras (b 9, lb 7, w 1, nb 8)	25
Total (8 wkts dec)	464

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-48, 2-69, 3-76, 4-85, 5-225, 6-225, 7-372, 8-464

BOWLING: Prasad 33-8-75-1; Singh 19-3-102-1; Srinath 27-6-90-1; Kumble 45.5-13-124-2; Tendulkar 7-0-30-2; Ganguly 6-1-27-0.

INDIA: First Innings 416 (R Dravid 190, J Srinath 76, S R Tendulkar 67, C L Cairns 4 for 107).

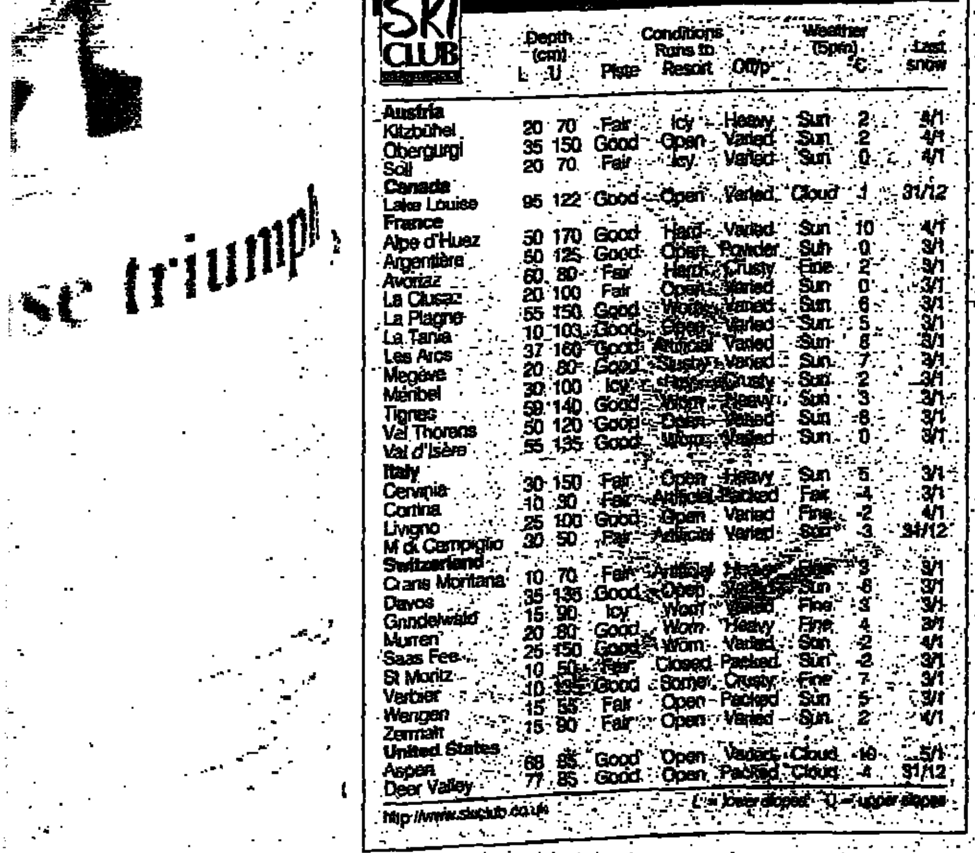
Second Innings

A Jadeja c Parore b Cairns	21
N S Sidhu b Cairns	13
R Dravid not out	103
S C Ganguly not out	101
Extras (lb 9, nb 2)	11
Total (2 wkts)	249

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-33, 2-55

BOWLING: Doull 4-0-17-0; Cairns 9-1-30-2; McMillan 17-4-59-0; Wiseman 12-0-80-0; Twose 9.1-0-50-0; Horne 1-0-4-0.

Umpires: R E Koertzen (South Africa) and D B Cowie.



SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	U	Conditions Piste	Runs to Resort	Off/p	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Austria								
Kitzbühel	20	70	Fair	Icy	Heavy	Sun	2	4/1
Obergurgl	35	150	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	2	4/1
Soll	20	70	Fair	Icy	Varied	Sun	0	4/1
Canada								
Lake Louise	95	122	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	1	31/12
France								
Alpe d'Huez	50	170	Good	Hard	Varied	Sun	10	4/1
Argentière	50	125	Good	Open	Powder	Sun	0	3/1
Avoriaz	60	80	Fair	Hard	Crusty	Fine	2	3/1
La Clusaz	20	100	Fair	Open	Varied	Sun	0	3/1
La Plagne	55	150	Good	Worn	Varied	Sun	6	3/1
La Tania	10	103	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	5	3/1
Les Arcs	37	160	Good	Artificial	Varied	Sun	8	3/1
Megève	20	80	Good	Slushy	Varied	Sun	7	3/1
Méribel	30	100	Icy	[illegible]	Crusty	Sun	2	3/1
Tignes	59	140	Good	Worn	Heavy	Sun	3	3/1
Val Thorens	50	120	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	-8	3/1
Val d'Isère	55	135	Good	Worn	Varied	Sun	0	3/1
Italy								
Cervinia	30	150	Fair	Open	Heavy	Sun	5	3/1
Cortina	10	30	Fair	Artificial	Packed	Fair	-4	3/1
Livigno	25	100	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	-2	4/1
M di Campiglio	30	50	Fair	Artificial	Varied	Sun	-3	31/12
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	10	70	Fair	Artificial	Heavy	Fine	3	3/1
Davos	35	135	Good	Open	[illegible]	Sun	-6	3/1
Grindelwald	15	90	Icy	Worn	Varied	Fine	3	3/1
Murren	20	80	Good	Worn	Heavy	Fine	4	3/1
Saas Fee	25	150	Good	Worn	Varied	Sun	-2	4/1
St Moritz	10	50	Fair	Closed	Packed	Sun	-2	3/1
Verbier	10	135	Good	Some	Crusty	Fine	7	3/1
Wengen	15	55	Fair	Open	Packed	Sun	5	3/1
Zermatt	15	90	Fair	Open	Varied	Sun	2	4/1
United States								
Aspen	68	85	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-10	5/1
Deer Valley	77	85	Good	Open	Packed	Cloud	-4	31/12

(L = lower slopes U = upper slopes)

http://www.skiclub.co.uk

FOR THE RECORD

FOOTBALL

Tuesday's late results

AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD: Northern section, second round: Halifax 4 York 2; Hull 1 Wrexham 2; Lincoln 1 Mansfield 0. Postponed: Darlington v Chesterfield, Rochdale v Stoke; Wigan v Scarborough. Southern section, second round: Bournemouth 5 Peterborough 1; Brighton 1 Millwall 5. Cambridge Utd 3 Northampton 2; Exeter 3 Southend 1; Luton 0 Walsall 3; Swansea 0 Gillingham 1, Torquay 2 Fulham 1 (aet; Torquay win on golden goal rule); Wycombe 1 Brentford 4.
TENNENT'S SCOTTISH CUP: Second-round replay: Postponed: Stirling v Montrose.
SCOTTISH LEAGUE: First division: Greenock Morton 0 St Mirren 0. Second division: Postponed: Arbroath v Forfar.
REPRESENTATIVE MATCH: FA XI 3 Combined Services 0.
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Unifilla first division Cup: Second round: Eastwood T/n 0 Bradford PA 1. Third round: Alfreton 0 Ashton 3
RYMAN LEAGUE: Second division: Banstead 1 Thame 3. Puma Cup: Second round: Carshalton 2 Chertsey 0 Vandanel Trophy: Third round: Tooting and Mitcham 3 Metropolitan Police 1.
SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE: First division: Larne 4 Ballyclare 1
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Arsenal 0 Oxford 1
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Liverpool 2 Leicester 1, Preston 0 Everton 2 First division: Oldham 1 Tranmere 0 Second division: Rotherham 1 Blackpool 3, Sheffield Utd 2 Huddersfield 1
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Third round: Barnet 0 Hartlepool 0; Scunthorpe 2 Portsmouth 1

ICE HOCKEY

SEKONDA SUPERLEAGUE: Cardiff Devils 2 Sheffield Steelers 1
NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): New Jersey 3 San Jose 3; Pittsburgh 5 Calgary 1, New York Islanders 1 Chicago 1; Edmonton 3 Los Angeles 4 (OT); Phoenix 2 Florida 2.

RUGBY LEAGUE

SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP THIRD-ROUND DRAW: Barrow v Dudley Hill, Batley v Castleford Lock Lane; Bramley v Leigh Miners Rangers; Dewsbury v Siddal, Doncaster v Oldham St Annes; Featherstone v Thornhill; Hemel Stags v Featherstone Lions; Hull KR v Wath Brow Hornets, Hunslet v Townville; Keighley v Rochdale Mayfield; Lancashire Lynx v Askam, Leigh v Norland; Oldham v Eccles, Rochdale v Wigan St Judes; Swinton v Moldgreen, Whitehaven v Saddleworth; Widnes v West Hull, Workington v Skirlaugh; York v Egremont.
☐ Ties to be played on January 30 and 31

RUGBY UNION

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP: First division: London Scottish 24 Gloucester 13, Newcastle 34 Bedford 29; Northampton 8 London Irish 32, Sale 30 Bath 32

SAILING

CLIPPER ROUND-THE-WORLD RACE: Leg 2d (Galapagos to Hawaii, with miles to finish): 1, Ariel (A Thomson) 2,582. 2, Antelope (K Harris) 2,711. 3, Senca (R Dean) 2,781. 4, Mermerus (B Solars) 2,802. 5, Chrysolite (T Hedges) 2,812. 6, Taeping (N Fleming) 2,840. 7, Thermopylae (M Tod) 2,946

SQUASH

SHEFFIELD: British junior open: Boys: Under-19: Semi-finals: Ong Beng Hee (Malaysia) bt P Barker (Eng) 4-9, 9-4, 9-2, 9-5; N Matthew (Eng) bt A Whipp (Eng) 9-1, 9-4, 9-4. Under-17: Semi-final: G Gaultier (Fr) bt H Seestaller (Ger) 9-3, 7-9, 9-2, 9-1. Under-15: Final: Y El Halaby (Egypt) bt O Rifaat (Egypt) 9-2, 9-3, 9-3. Under-13: Semi-finals: R Ashour (Egypt) bt A Sewefi (Egypt) 9-4, 9-2, 9-1; T Richards (Eng) bt Yu Chun Kwong (HK) 9-3, 9-6, 2-9, 10-9. Final: Ashour bt Richards 9-0, 9-0. Girls: Under-17: Semi-finals: N David (Malaysia) bt L Hall (US) 9-3, 9-3, 9-2, J Duncalf (Eng) bt K Rohrmuller (Ger) 9-2, 9-0, 6-9, 9-2. Under-15: Semi-finals: O El Kawy (Egypt) bt M Quibell (US) 9-2, 2-9, 9-1, 9-5; A Waters (Eng) bt T Fox (Eng) 9-7, 10-8, 9-3. Final: El Kawy bt Waters 9-1, 9-7, 9-0. Under-13: Semi-finals: R El Welely (Egypt) bt J Chinappa (India) 9-3, 9-6, 5-9, 9-7. S Badr (Egypt) bt N Yehya (Egypt) 3-9, 9-3, 9-1, 9-5. Final: Badr bt El Welely 9-6, 10-8, 9-7

TENNIS

DOHA: Qatar Open: First round: H Arazi (Mor) bt M Safin (Russ) 6-1, 6-3, 7-6; Y Kafelnikov (Russ) bt S Huet (Fr) 3-6, 6-3, 6-4. K Alami (Mor) bt P Korda (Cz) 7-6, 2-6, 6-3. R Schuttler (Ger) bt A Medvedev (Ukr) 1-6, 6-3, 7-6; C van Garsse (Bel) bt F Dewulf (Bel) 6-1, 7-6, M Zabaleta (Arg) bt C Costa (Sp) 6-4, 6-3. J Sánchez (Sp) bt K Carlsen (Den) 6-3, 6-4, B Karbacher (Ger) bt G Rusedski (GB) 4-6, 7-6, 6-3. Second round: J Tarango (US) bt F Vicente (Sp) 6-3, 7-5, Schuttler bt D Vacek (Cz) 7-6, 6-3, G Ivanisevic (Cro) bt Van Garsse 6-3, 6-0; T Henman (GB) bt Y El Aynaoui (Mor) 4-6, 6-3, 6-0
PERTH: Hopman Cup: Group A: Slovak Republic 2 Switzerland 1. Group B: France 2 South Africa 1

FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Crystal Palace v Swindon (2.0); Norwich v Brighton (7.30)

ICE HOCKEY

SEKONDA SUPERLEAGUE: London Knights v Sheffield Steelers (7.30); Newcastle Riverkings v Cardiff Devils (7.15).

BOWLS

Schuback loses at end of long day

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

BOWLS a slow game? Never, say the sport's spin doctors, though they face a hard job trying to convince those, such as the ITV executive, who said that watching a game of bowls was like watching grass grow, and have dismissed bowls as a geriatric pastime. To be fair, the leisurely pace belies a hidden intensity. At its best, bowls burns like a slow fuse, and can ignite dramatically, and the initiative can change hands with a single delivery.

There were moments of high drama yesterday to keep a large crowd enthralled at the Potters Leisure Resort on the Norfolk coast, where the quarter-finals of the world indoor pairs championship unfolded with some style. However, there was no denying that the marathon encounter in which Graham Robertson and Richard Corsie, the defending champions, of Scotland, defeated Ian Taylor and Ian Schuback, of Australia, 7-6, 3-7, 7-4, 3-7, 7-2, was agonisingly slow.

It turned out to be one of the longest pairs matches since the championships began in 1986. After three hours and 25 minutes, the scores were level, two sets all, as the fifth and deciding set started. At that stage, Schuback, 46, had spent 5½ hours on the rink, having crept into the arena at five o'clock in the morning for two hours' practice.

Of all the bowlers today, Schuback is the one who looks as if he owns the rink — the impression that the legendary David Bryant gave when he dominated the scene. Yesterday, however, the former Australian Rules footballer met his match because Corsie, too, walks down the rink with a swagger and is never likely to be intimidated.

Corsie, who has won the world indoor singles three times, and the pairs twice, has cut a low profile since he won the Commonwealth Games singles gold medal in 1994, preferring to focus on his business interests. Winning the Glasgow Classic just before Christmas, and being made an MBE in the New Year's Honours List, have clearly boosted his confidence, and he showed many fine touches, as he and Robertson won the first, third and fifth sets.

Corsie and Schuback fell out some years ago, but have made up their differences, though the rivalry simmered beneath the surface. Schuback played some scintillating firing shots, but one of his best was an inch-perfect draw on what turned out to be the last end, when, at 2-6, he set up a lie of two shots. Significantly, however, his front toucher was beaten by a magical forehand draw from Corsie, and the Australian's despairing drive succeeded only in taking his own nearest bowl out of the head.

QUARTER-FINALS: G Smith and A Thomson (Eng) bt M McMahon (Aus) and D Gourlay (Scot) 7-2, 7-2, 7-4; G Robertson and R Corsie (Scot) bt I Taylor and I Schuback (Aus) 7-6, 3-7, 7-4, 3-7, 7-2.

SQUASH

Egyptians prove unbeatable

BY COLIN MCQUILLAN

EGYPT dominated the lower age groups of the CGU British junior open championships in Sheffield, allowing other nations only eight points in four finals at under-13 and under-15 levels.

These statistics were assisted by the 9-2, 9-3, 9-3 victory by Yasser El Halaby over Omar Refaat in the all-Egyptian boys' under-15 final, and by Sarah Badr's 9-6, 10-8, 9-7 win over Ranim El Welely, who is only ten, in the girls' under-13 final.

With Tom Richards, of Surrey, failing to win a point against Rami Ashour in the boys' under-13 final, it was left to Alison Waters, of Middlesex, to salvage the only session points from Egypt. She lost 9-1, 9-7, 9-0 in 17 minutes to Omneya El Kawy in the girls' under-15 final.

Yorkshire players were hoping to duplicate the Egyptian achievement in the older finals last night. Jenny Duncalf and James Willson were due to face Nicol David, of Malaysia, and Gregory Galtier, of France, in the under-17 event, while Cheryl Beaumont and Nick Matthews were in the under-19 finals against Elisabet Sado, of Spain, and Ongbeng Hee, of Malaysia, who was a doubtful starter because of flu.

TENNIS: BRITISH No 1 ADVANCES TO QUARTER-FINALS AFTER DROPPING FIRST SET

Henman tames Moroccan

FROM ALIX RAMSAY IN DOHA, QATAR

IT IS only day three of the new tennis season yet suddenly the holidays seem a distant memory. After six weeks at home and a leisurely first round at the Qatar Mobil Open, Tim Henman was forced back to some serious work yesterday, grafting for two hours to beat Younes El Aynaoui 4-6, 6-3, 6-0 and claim his place in the quarter-finals.

With a scoreline like that, the match would appear to have been relatively simple — a close opening set before the Great Britain No 1 got his act together and cruised home. Unfortunately for the small contingent of nervous British supporters, it was not nearly as easy as that. For two-thirds of the way, it was an intriguing game of chess between the two men who, although both having more than enough weapons to hurt the other, found it difficult to hit the target on key points.

Results.........49

Still, to come through such a struggle so early after the Christmas break gave Henman cause for some celebration. "You want to be up against it a little bit," he said, "and I was pleased with the way I responded."

Aynaoui's reputation went before him. Last year, he missed five months of the season with an ankle injury but managed to haul himself back from the depths of the rankings to break into the top 50. By the time he arrived here, he was ready for battle and took Fabrice Santoro apart in the first round. Henman had taken a quiet look at that match and knew what he was up against, but even yet he was surprised by the ferocity of some of the Moroccan's shots.

"He's got a great first serve and a really good forehand and he bases his game around that," Henman said, trying a little British understatement. A pencil-thin 6ft 4in, made up mainly of arms and legs, El Aynaoui really clatters his service and when he gets all those limbs in unison behind the forehand it can be deadly. The backhand is not bad either. When he chooses to play the shot double-handed, he steers the ball with not inconsiderable power and startling accuracy into the narrowest of gaps. Any net-rushing volleyer think carefully before committing himself.

The crowd was, for the most part, backing El Aynaoui and was led in its cheering by one vociferous soul whose remarkable lung-power more than made up for his lack of imagination. They had more than enough to shout about as their man engineered two break points before taking the lead with the third and serving out for the first set.

By contrast, Henman's chances had come and gone by the hatful. Seven break points escaped him in the first set and a further two in the second before he finally converted one of his opportunities. Once he was ahead, he managed to repel any further challenges. Midway through the second set the Moroccan appeared to injure his neck and called for the trainer between points. The trainer could do little apart from offer a little advice and El Aynaoui responded by belting the next Henman service back past the Briton's knees.

"It was a strange match," Henman said. "I thought I played my best tennis in the first set but although I created the chances I didn't take them. But if you are creating that many opportunities, you must be doing something right. Once I got that break it settled me down a little bit. The first game of the third set was crucial and to win eight of the last nine games is a good sign."

Henman now plays the volatile American, Jeff Tarango, who had far less trouble reaching the quarter-finals, defeating Fernando Vicente, from Spain, 6-3, 7-5. Goran Ivanisevic, who was also not prepared to waste much time, swept past Cristophe Van Garsse, a qualifier from Belgium, 6-3, 6-0 in a mere 43 minutes.

GREG WOOD



Dokic, the 15-year-old Australian, plays a forehand return during her Hopman Cup victory over Sánchez Vicario

Australia inspired by Dokic

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

AGE and reputation counted for nothing in the Hopman Cup tournament in Perth yesterday as Spain, the No 1 seeds, were *humbled* by Australia, with the Sydney schoolgirl, Jelena Dokic, 15, leading the way for the host nation.

Dokic, the world's leading junior last year, stunned Arantxa Sánchez Vicario 6-3, 6-2 while Mark Philippoussis beat Carlos Moyà, like Sánchez Vicario the French Open champion, 6-4, 7-6 before Moyà pulled out of the mixed doubles with influenza. That gave Australia a 3-0 victory and put them in a strong position to qualify for the final on Saturday.

Philippoussis, a player who has suffered from a surfeit of public attention, implored Australians to leave Dokic alone if they wanted the Belgrade-born girl, who emigrated to Australia with her family five years ago, to fulfil her potential. "Leave her alone and let her enjoy what she is doing," Philippoussis said. "She's 15 years old, full of confidence, and loves playing the game. There will be agents running after her later on. She is definitely going to become a top player, but we should just give her space."

Slovakia, the champions, suffered a setback when Karol Kucera and Karina Habsudova were beaten 3-6, 6-3, 1-6 by Jonas Bjorkman and Asa Carlsson, of Sweden.

Answers from page 47

TOTO
(c) A louse. French military argot of the 1914-18 war. "I do not know who developed lice first, but I noticed them on that march. We called them 'totos'."

URKEY
(c) A local name of a children's game. Also the person who is "it" in this game. Origin unknown. "The best game was an evening one, called Urkey. One boy who was Urkey stood still by a tin can while the others hid. When a shout told that they had found a hiding place he went in search of them. His object was to see one and run home to the can, crying 'I Urkey Johnny Williams'."

WARI
(c) A board game, originally West African but now played also in the West Indies and Guyana.

SHUNGA
(b) An example of Japanese erotic art, a painting or print of an erotic nature.

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE

1 ... Bxe3+! wins material, e.g. 2 Qxe3 Rxd4 3 Qxd4 Rc1+

TELEVISION CHOICE

A warrior's legacy

Meet the Ancestors
BBC2, 9.00pm

The United States Air Force base at Lakenheath in Suffolk is the incongruous location for the latest exercise in recreating the looks and the lives of our very distant forebears. The starting point is the discovery, under an old baseball field, of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery with 160 graves. One grave in particular is the focus of interest. It contains the remains of a warrior who was buried, according to the custom of 1,300 years ago, with his horse, as well as his spear, shield and sword. So there is much for the experts to work on as they try to establish the age of the warrior and what he looked like, attempt a reconstruction of the sword and ponder how the horse came to be sacrificed in order to lie beside its master.

The team researching the Lakenheath warrior in *Meet the Ancestors* (BBC2, 9pm)

The Knock
ITV, 9.00pm

A tendency towards cardboard villains and mechanical plotting has not stopped the Customs and Excise drama from making a fourth series, though it is hard to ditch a show which has a regular audience of more than ten million. The bad boys this time, at least for the first three episodes, are an Anglo-American team played by Bryan Marshall and Michael Brandon smuggling plutonium from Russia to South Africa for the manufacture of a nuclear bomb. The smuggling of rifle parts into Britain, and a revenge killing, provide material for the main subplot. As often happens in *The Knock* there is so much going on that there is little chance to flesh out the regular characters, the customs officers. The main newcomer is David Ancrom (Mark Lewis Jones), appointed to head the City and South team over a very displeased Barry Christie (Steve Toussaint).

Dispatches
Channel 4, 9.00pm

One of the consequences of last year's *Dispatches* report about battered women was a flood of phone calls and letters from men saying: what about us? Hence this companion programme about male victims of domestic violence. It is based on a survey of 100 men and is claimed to be the first of its kind. Nobody pretends that man-battering is on anything like the same scale. But the intensity of the violence, and the grief it leaves in its wake, can be just as great. We hear from a 19-stone man who suffered broken ribs and fingers, black eyes and kidney damage from a partner less than 5ft tall. A police officer, no less, tells how his violent partner drove him to the point of suicide. A couple of the women batterers also speak. It seems they were taking revenge for being knocked about by previous male partners.

Horizon: Born to be Fat
BBC2, 9.30pm

A solidly scientific contribution to the BBC's obesity season rounds up recent research into that baffling conundrum of why some people are fat and others slim, even when they eat the same meals. Meanwhile, we follow the progress of Glenda, who starts the programme at 21 stone and ends it at a more manageable 13. But as 95 per cent of diets fail, there is every chance she will put the weight back on. The idea that putting on weight was caused by a slower metabolism was blown out of the window years ago, leaving the experts to pursue other theories. Four years ago they seemed to have an answer, when work on mice suggested that obesity was linked to the absence of a newly discovered hormone, leptin. After a false start the leptin theory is back, suggesting that obesity may be in the genes. **Peter Waymark**

RADIO CHOICE

Night Waves
Radio 3, 10.45pm

Why on earth does Hollywood keep on doing it? Aren't there any new plots? Now that classic movies from the past are regularly screened on television, how can studio bosses argue that every new *generation of filmgoers needs new versions of* them? I presume these and related questions will be considered by Paul Allen in Radio 3's arts magazine. Clearly what has prompted *Night Waves* to include this item is the release in the US of a 1990s version of Hitchcock's 1960 shocker *Psycho* which repeats every scene and line of dialogue from the original. The only differences are the use of colour and the employment of a new cast. I was happy to read that the "new" *Psycho* has been given the cold shoulder treatment at America's box offices.

The Head of Medusa
Radio 4, 2.15pm

The message in George Brandt's play about the 16th-century Italian sculptor Benvenuto Cellini comes across loud and clear in the closing minutes, though it is implicit long before this. It is delivered *by Cellini (Tim Pigott-Smith) himself*: "Art is one thing, but power is something else altogether — a sharper edge." Art is represented by the famed Florentine and power by his inartistic patron, Duke Cosimo I (John Talfer) who commissions Cellini to produce a statue of Perseus and then treats him abominably. Brandt draws upon the best source for his boisterous script, Cellini's autobiography. Whether we can believe everything he says is another matter altogether: Cellini was notorious for his braggadocio. **Peter Davalle**

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00** Kevin Greening **2.00pm** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Chris Moyles **6.00** Dave Pearce **8.00** Steve Lamacq: The Evening Session **10.00** Trade Update with Clara McDonnell **10.10** John Peel **12.00** Andy Kershaw **2.00am** Clive Warren **4.00** Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Alex Lester **7.30** Sarah Kennedy **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.00** Jimmy Young **2.00pm** Ed Stewart **5.05** Johnnie Walker **7.00** David Allan **8.00** Paul Jones **9.00** Barry Took's Comedy Classics: The Men from the Ministry (3/6) **9.30** Love 40: New Balls Please (6/6) **10.00** Girls and Guitars: Shania Twain (5/6) **10.30** Richard Allinson **12.00** Lynn Parsons **3.00am** Mo Dutta

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast with Julian Worricker and Victoria Derbyshire **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00** The Midday News. Presented by Annie Webster **1.00pm** Ruscoe and Co **4.00** Drive. Presented by Jane Garvey and Peter Allen **7.00** News Extra **7.30** Hardest Game. Harry Carpenter reflects on his 50 years commentating on professional boxing **8.00** Inside Edge **9.00** Hoops. Round-up of British basketball news **9.30** Sportshop **10.00** Late Night Live **1.00am** Up All Night

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans **9.30** Russ Williams **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Bobby Ham **7.30** Harriet Scott **10.00** Mark Forrest **1.00am** James Merritt **4.30** Jeremy Clark

TALK RADIO

6.00am Bill Overton & Sally Meen **9.00** Scott Chisholm **12.00** Lorraine Kelly **2.00pm** Anna Raeburn **4.00** Peter Deeley **5.00** The Sports Zone **8.00** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** News **7.15** Off the Shelf: The Suit **7.30** Composer of the Month **8.00** News **8.10** Pause for Thought **8.15** Performance **8.30** Electronic Jukebox **9.00** News; (648 only) News in German **9.05** World Business Report **9.15** Wild Tales **9.30** Network **9.45** Sports Round-Up **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Discovery **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Record News **11.45** From Our Own Correspondent **12.00pm** News **12.05** World Business Report **12.15** Britain Today **12.30** Early Versions **12.45** Sports Round-Up **1.00** Newshour **2.00** News **2.05** Outlook **2.30** Multitrack: X-Press **3.00** News; (648 only) News in German **3.05** Sports Round-Up **3.15** Westway **3.30** The Vintage Chart Show **4.00** News **4.15** Record News **4.30** Insight; (648 only) News in German **4.45** Britain Today **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Round-Up **6.00** Newsdesk **6.30** Assignment; (648 only) News in German **7.00** News Summary **7.01** Outlook **7.25** Pause for Thought **7.30** John Peel **8.00** Newshour **9.00** News **9.05** World Business Report **9.15** Britain Today **9.30** Meridian Books **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Insight **10.45** Sports Round-Up **11.00** News **11.05** Outlook **11.30** John Peel **12.00am** Newsdesk **12.30** Westway **12.45** Britain Today **1.00** Newsdesk **1.30** Composer of the Month **2.00** Newsday **2.30** Focus on Faith **3.00** News **3.05** World Business Report **3.15** Sports Round-Up **3.30** Assignment **4.00** The World Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast. A selection of rousing music to start the day **8.00** Henry Kelly. The Hall of Fame Hour. Plus, favourite pieces voted for in the Classic FM Top 300 **12.00pm** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones presents favourite music **2.00** Concerto. Rodrigo (Concierto de Aranjuez) **3.00** Jamie Crick. Continuous Classics and Afternoon Romance **6.30** Newsnight. The latest headlines and sport updates **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces classic sounds **9.00** Evening Concert. Poulenc (Gloria); Tailleferre (Concertino for Harp and Orchestra); Milhaud (La Creation du Monde); Honegger (Pacific 231); Poulenc (Organ Concerto) **11.00** Mann at Night. A chance to wind down with the sound of ambient music **2.00am** Concerto (r) **3.00** MarkGriffiths

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air with Stephanie Hughes. Includes a review of the RSC's new production of *The Winter's Tale* at Stratford
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Includes Nielsen (Helios Overture); Bach (English Suite No 1 in A, BWV806); Debussy (Danse Sacree et Profane); Berlioz (Romeo Alone; Love Scene; Queen Mab Scherzo, Romeo and Juliet)
10.30 Artist of the Week: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau
11.00 Sound Stories: Five Painters — Manet
12.00 Composer of the Week: Poulenc
1.00pm The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert A new season from Manchester begins with the Prazak Quartet performing Martinu (String Quartet No 7, Concerto da camera); Dvorak (String Quartet No 10 in E flat, Op 51)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Alun Francis, Alexander Titov, Martyn Brabbins and Jean Yves Ossonce, Lars Vogt, piano. Ireland (A London Overture); Haydn (Symphony No 92 in G, Oxford); Schumann (Piano Concerto in A minor)
4.00 Ensemble (r)
4.45 Music Machine with Tommy Pearson
5.00 In Tune Sean Rafferty celebrates Poulenc's centenary with a look at Parisian café society
7.30 Performance on 3: A Lutheran Evening A performance given at the 1997 Lufthansa Festival of Baroque Music. Susanne Ryden, soprano, Steven Rickards, countertenor, Ian Partridge, tenor, Michael Schopper, bass, Bach Ensemble under Joshua Rifkin. Bach (Cantata No 30: Freue dich, erloste Schar; Mass in G, BWV236)
8.35 Postscript: Fictuality — Abide with Me by John Fletcher (4/5) (r)
8.55 London Symphony Orchestra under Colin Davis. Sibelius (En Saga); Beethoven (Symphony No 7 in A)
10.00 Music Restored Lucie Skeaping and Chris de Souza introduce the first of two programmes of unheard receodings from the 1998 series
10.45 Night Waves See Choice
11.30 Jazz Notes Alyn Shipton is joined by Dave Gelly *for a review of Jonny King's book What Jazz Is*
12.00 Composer of the Week: Saint-Saens (r)
1.00 Through the Night with Donald Macleod. **1.00** Polish NRSO under Moche Atzmon, Idil Biret, piano. Brahms (Piano Concerto No 1 in D minor; Symphony No 2 in D) **3.10** Mozart (Serenade in C minor, K388) **4.00** Roman (Drottningholm Music, excerpts) **4.35** Nielsen (Little Suite) **5.20** C.P.E. Bach (Concerto in E flat)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast
5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.47 Farming Today Rural issues, with Charlotte Smith
6.00 Today Presented by Winifred Robinson and James Naughtie
9.00 In Our Time with Melvyn Bragg
9.30 Lean Times Jeremy Cherfas investigates pig farmers' efforts to support one another (2/2)
9.45 (FM) Serial: The Vanished World (4/5)
9.45 (LW) Daily Service
10.00 Woman's Hour with Jenni Murray
11.00 From Our Own Correspondent Global news
11.30 Old Dog and the Partridge Nicola breaks her father's prized bowl. A sitcom by Joe Turner, starring Michael Williams and Lisa Coleman (2/6)
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.00 (FM) News 12.04pm You and Yours Liz Barclay and John Waite introduce consumer news
1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke
1.30 Hidden Treasures Lars Tharp presents the antiques quiz, from the V&A Museum, London
2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: The Head of Medusa by George Brandt. The story behind Renaissance sculptor Benvenuto Cellini's masterpiece *Perseus Holding the Head of Medusa*. Starring Tim Pigott-Smith and Pamela Miles. See Choice
3.00 Call You and Yours: 0171-580 4444 Peter White presents the consumer justice programme
3.30 The Melting Pot Tom Jaine sees how rural traditions are keeping Croatian cusine alive
3.45 This Sceptred Isle Anna Massey narrates the history of Britain (r)
4.00 Word of Mouth Michael Rosen explores forgotten English words and questions the extent to which the spoken language is become Americanised
4.30 The Material World Trevor Phillips finds out how animals communicate with each other
5.00 PM Presented by Charlie Lee-Potter
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 The Worriers Comedy starring Toby Longworth and Niall Ashdown (5/6)
7.00 The Archers 7.15 Front Row John Wilson reassesses Humphrey Bogart on the centenary of the Hollywood star's birth
7.45 Under One Roof by Michele Hanson (r)
8.00 Case History Roy Porter considers the careers of leading 20th-century political figures from the perspective of their health, or lack of it. The first programme focuses on the 1980s, when Reagan and Brezhnev led the superpowers (r)
8.30 The Political Euro Gordon Brewer considers the implications of the single European currency, questioning whether it will lead to greater political integration
9.00 Testbeds New ten-part series in which Vanessa Collingridge explores how technology will affect the future (1/10)
9.30 In Our Time with Melvyn Bragg (r)
10.00 The World Tonight
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Nana Part four of Emile Zola's novel, read by Juliet Stevenson
11.00 Late Night on 4: World of Pub New comedy by Tony Roche about landlord Dodgy Phil and his far-fetched schemes to attract customers. Guest-starring Edith Piaf (1/4)
11.30 (FM) Experimental Feature: Mercian Hymns Geoffrey Hill's epic poetic tribute to the Midlands. With Simon Russell-Beale and David Bradley
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament
11.45 (FM) It's a Funny Old World Simon Hoggart takes a light-hearted look at the workings of the European Parliament. With Neil Kinnock (r)
12.00 News 12.30 The Late Book: The Restraint of Beasts Part nine of Magnus Mills's tale
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. **RADIO 2.** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3.** FM 90.2-92.4. **RADIO 4.** FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. **RADIO 5 LIVE.** MW 693, 909. **WORLD SERVICE.** MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). **CLASSIC FM.** FM 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO.** FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. **TALK RADIO.** MW 1053, 1089.
Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

The best theory to explain it all? Probably

REVIEW

Joe Joseph

Even for us fair-weather scientists who sometimes find that a whole week has passed without our having spent more than ten minutes thinking about Newton or quantum mechanics, it's a shock to discover after all these years that when Einstein said that clever thing about, "When you are courting a nice girl an hour seems like a second. When you sit on a red-hot cinder a second seems like an hour. That's relativity", he was not being totally honest. It turns out that it's all a *lot* more complex than that.

David Malone's film **The Flow of Time** (BBC2) did a remarkable job of exploring rival theories about time and space in the sort of lucid, enlightening way that made you realise how many questions remain unanswered, how many contradictions between the biggest scientific ideas of the 20th century are still unresolved and how smart you were to have chosen history to study at university.

Like the medieval Christian view of time, Einstein's physics says (I'm paraphrasing) that all the moments of our lives are already out there, ahead of us, just waiting for us to step into them. Professor Roger Penrose, who knows a lot about these things, is pretty impressed with this idea, explaining that: "There's no more problem about the future being out there, in a sense, than there is with space being out there. You say, 'Mars is out there'. Why is that any more comprehensible than, say, 'Next week is out there'. It's just as far away in a certain sense. Mars is still out there, but it's not something we can easily, immediately access."

The big downside, of course, is that if you believe your entire existence is pre-ordained, and that there is no such thing as free will, it can take some of the stuffing out of life. It makes life seem as predictable and straightforward as a train journey (not, obviously, a Virgin or Connex train journey).

But then some scientists started finding that relativity proved to be a problematic theory at the atomic and subatomic level — where there appeared to be no certainties, only probabilities (now this sounds a *lot* more like a Virgin or Connex train). Quantum mechanics began asking *how* — if the future of a single particle is so random as to be unpredictable — one could believe that the future of something as complex as the world could be pre-ordained. Thus quantum mechanics opened the door once again to free will (though Einstein wasn't convinced: he liked to say that "God does not play dice").

Hang on, isn't *there* a paradox *here*? If Einstein is right, and the world's future *is* a story foretold, wouldn't it have been pre-determined that quantum theory would one day pull the rug from under Einstein's feet? And if this rebuttal *was* pre-ordained, and Einstein's theory of relativity *is* flawed, then how did Einstein's theory manage to predict that quantum mechanics *would* come along one day to contradict it? This is a circle that turns vicious pretty quickly.

Scientists seem to agree that quantum mechanics and relativity both tell us something important, profound and accurate about how the world operates, but appear to be incompatible. This incompatability may be resolved in the future — who knows? (apart from Einstein, obviously) — but for the moment Penrose admits "there's something missing". I'll say.

Now another mystery: ever wondered why male gorillas look so grumpy? It could well be because "they possess such minute genitalia that they are difficult to find" (and you thought they were scouring for nits). This is one of the many mesmerising facts about sex in the animal kingdom that Battle of the Sexes (BBC2) will be bringing us over the next six weeks.

What last night's opening episode of the series made clear was that it's almost a full-time job for males to find a mate and then have sex with them, or prevent someone else from having sex with them— pretty much the same facts of life as in Washington, then.

In fact the behaviour of wild animals and domesticated humans isn't all that different anywhere. That sore-headed bull bison looked like any man who's just woken up with a hangover bigger than Oregon, hasn't gotten around to shaving yet and is gallumphing around the herd trying to remember where he kept the Alka-Seltzer.

That midget male angler fish which latched on to the much bigger female and fused his body onto hers reminded you of the time Mae West warned a miniscule admirer that if he made love to her, and she ever found out about it, she was going to be really angry.

"Hello, I'm Carol Vorderman," were Carol Vorderman's first words to us in her new(est) series, **Dream House** (BBC1), just in case there's still a TV-owner who doesn't yet know who she is, or how much she earns. Carol and her builders, designers and technical experts are spending the next few weeks erecting an eco-friendly, high-tech house for the millennium. Along with gadget tests, and makeovers of people's houses, the series is part *Tomorrow's World*, part *Changing Rooms*, part Good Housekeeping Institute product-testing, and part *Through The Keyhole* (this week: architect John Young's minimalist penthouse).

This programme is not to be confused with Vorderman's other new series this week, *Carol Vorderman's Better Homes* on ITV. It is sobering to think that all the hundreds of new television series that Vorderman will present over the coming decades are already "out there" in the future, if you believe Einstein. You might find this an incentive to throw in your lot with the quantum theorists.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (29668)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (45587)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (8830533)
9.45 The Vanessa Show (T) (5376303)
10.55 News; Weather (T) (7179397)
11.00 Real Rooms (7252674)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (7159533)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (1455129)
12.00 Call My Bluff (36736)
12.30pm Battersea Dogs' Home (54620)
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (48674)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (86863533)
1.40 Neighbours Libby steels herself for an important meeting (T) (65550649)
2.05 Ironside Mark worries about a driving accident, while the Chief investigates a jewel theft (r) (7836823)
2.55 Going for a Song (8738378)
3.20 The Weather Show (T) (2232129)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (8124638) **3.45** All New Popeye Show (9238281) **3.55** Pocket Dragons (9234465) **4.05** Rugrats (6191552) **4.20** Home Farm Twins (6285945) **4.35** Short Change (1895465) **5.00** Newsround (5632194) **5.10** See How They Run (6772649)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (274397)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (129)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (281)
7.00 Watchdog with Anne Robinson Compilation of reports championing the cause of badly treated holidaymakers (T) (1216)
7.30 EastEnders Frank finds himself in the spotlight (T) (465)
8.00 Vets in Practice New series. Trude faces an eventful time as her parents arrive on a flying visit from Norway, and an error in the operating theatre leads to a potentially fatal situation. Craig fights against the odds to save an ailing cat, while Alison is confronted by a terrier with a mystifying problem (T) (4736)
8.30 Fat Free New series examining the issues surrounding being overweight, looking into associated health risks and the impact on self-esteem. The programme follows five individuals with a common goal — winning the battle of the bulge (1/6) (T) (6571)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (8397)
9.30 Braveheart (1995) Premiere. Multi-Oscar-winning historical epic charting the life of the Scottish hero William Wallace and his efforts to defeat the tyrannical Edward I of England in a series of grisly battles. Directed by and starring Mel Gibson, with Patrick McGoohan and Sophie Marceau. Directed by Mel Gibson (T) (78877200)
12.20am Faces of Islam New series. Hakeeem Olajuwan explains how his religion blends with his career as a professional basketball player for the Houston Rockets (T) (6969137)
12.40 A Professional Gun (1968) A gunman is hired to smuggle silver during the Mexican Revolution, but is persuaded by the promise of cash to switch his loyalties. Spaghetti western, starring Franco Nero. Directed by Sergio Corbucci (T) (401601)
2.20 Weather (9719446)
2.25 BBC News 24 (89538953)

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BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Open a Door (5658691) **7.05** Teletubbies (2105668) **7.30** Yogi's Treasure Hunt (2498755) **7.50** Blue Peter (3053620) **8.20** Taz-Mania (9021620) **8.40** Polka Dot Shorts (9829705) **8.55** Open a Door (6492842) **9.00** Fiddley Foodle Bird (7308858) **9.10** The Phil Silvers Show (6838465) **9.35** The Phil Silvers Show (5016991) **10.00** Teletubbies (29007) **10.30** FILM: Cervantes (95842) **12.30pm** Working Lunch (52262) **1.00** Fiddley Foodle Bird (73841378)
1.10 The Arts and Crafts Hour A chair receives a facelift, and terracotta pots are given a weathered look (2659620)
2.10 Darts: World Professional Championship Another chance to see yesterday's crucial sets (92515246)
6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Rom and Leeta plan a wedding, despite the looming shadow of war as the Dominion fleet masses near the wormhole (T) (276587)
6.45 Sliders The dimensional wanderers have a chance to return home — until they encounter a scientist trying to create a race of slaves from human DNA (T) (670674)
7.28 Suspended in Time (T) (428277)
7.30 First Sight Investigations into a range of topical issues (T) (197)
8.00 The Travel Show New series. Juliet Morris samples the volcanic delights of Gran Canaria and sees what else this popular destination has to offer, while Jim White enjoys the sub-zero temperatures of Reykjavik (T) (2378)
8.30 Jeremy Clarkson's Extreme Machines Jeremy Clarkson hitches a ride in a Formula One inshore powerboat and witnesses hair-raising antics at the Reno Air Races in Nevada (r) (T) (4113)
9.00 CHOICE **Meet the Ancestors** New series. Investigation into an Anglo-Saxon grave in Suffolk, where the remains of a warrior in full battle regalia have been discovered (T) (6939)


Celebrating size: the Padded Lillies, a swimming troupe (9.30pm)

9.30 CHOICE **Fat Files: A Horizon Trilogy** Documentary on the science behind weight problems, examining the many myths surrounding weight gain and dieting (1/3) (T) (123045)
10.20 Meetings with Remarkable Trees A yew tree which inspired Wordsworth (3/8) (r) (T) (336002)
10.30 Newsnight The day's headlines, with Jeremy Paxman (T) (976823)
11.13 Suspended in Time (T) (400620)
11.15 Darts: World Professional Championship Highlights of this evening's quarter-finals (899561)
11.55 Skiing Forecast (389303)
12.00am The Phil Silvers Show The Colonel enters a golf tournament (r) (95779)
12.30 Close

HTV

5.30am ITN Morning News (38858)
6.00 GMTV (6035858)
9.25 Trisha (T) (2297484)
10.25 This Morning (T) (62898303)
12.15pm HTV News (T) (9520007)
12.30 ITN Lunchtime News (T) (52216)
1.00 Shortland Street Ellen is given food for thought (60842)
1.30 Home and Away Sally and Jesse contemplate leaving (T) (51587)
2.00 The Jerry Springer Show Outrageous American talk show (T) (2060113)
2.45 Supermarket Sweep (T) (652755)
3.15 ITN News Headlines (T) (2157484)
3.20 HTV News (T) (2154397)
3.25 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (2137620) **3.35** The Adventures of Dawdle (8686842) **3.45** *The Sylvester and Tweety Mysteries* (8673378) **4.00** Lavender Castle (6194648) **4.15** Hey Arnold (6738692) **4.40** The Worst Witch (7270755)
5.10 A Country Practice Hugo befriends a runaway (3551246)
5.36 HTV Crimestoppers (864200)
5.40 ITN Early Evening News (T) (978216)
6.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (395842)
6.25 WALES: Wales Tonight (T) (286133)
6.25 WEST: HTV Weather (441620)
6.30 The West Tonight (T) (649)
7.00 Emmerdale Kathy has a surprise for Kim (T) (3484)
7.30 WEST: The Making of Mother Goose Behind the scenes of Bristol Old Vic's panto production of *Mother Goose* (533)
7.30 WALES: Somewhere in Wales: St Fagans at 50 (1/2) (r) (T) (533)
8.00 Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? Big-money quiz (T) (9804)
8.30 Neighbours from Hell New series drawing on eyewitness testimony and film footage to provide accounts of across-the-fence feuds (T) (8939)


Michael Brandon guest-stars as an international smuggler (9pm)

9.00 CHOICE **The Knock** New series. As a new boss takes over, the investigators pursue a drug baron and his partner (1/6) (T) (7129)
10.00 News at Ten; Weather (T) (22533)
10.30 HTV News and Weather (T) (275736)
10.40 Thursday Night Live New series. Hard-hitting debate, hosted by Nicky Campbell (1/13) (7567020)
12.10am Jenny American sitcom (5141953)
12.40 The Jerry Springer Show (T) (7924088)
1.25 The Super (1991) The landlord of a slum development is forced to experience life from his tenants' point of view. Comedy, starring Joe Pesci. Directed by Rod Daniel (9163953)
2.55 Box Office America Top 10 US movie releases (7082311)
3.25 Cybernet Computer news (86748804)
3.55 Murder, She Wrote y (r) (1800359)
4.45 Judge Judy Real-life cases (34797866)
5.05 ITV Nightscreen (1901885)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.20-12.30pm Central News (6146755)
1.00 Echo Point (60842)
1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (9168910)
2.15-2.45 Home and Away (653484)
3.20-3.25 Central News (2154397)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (3551246)
6.30-6.55 Central News; Weather (465397)
6.55-7.00 Lifeline (661620)
7.30-8.00 My Mum's a Knockout (533)
10.30-10.40 Central News; Weather (275736)
12.10-12.45am Public Morals (5890088)
1.30 Pirate TV (51972)
2.00 Real Stories (9114934)
2.20 ITV at the Belfort Festival (6821779)
3.15 Cybernet (62348048)
3.40 Potty About Pets (14457224)
4.10 Central Jobfinder '99 (8345427)
5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (4473021)

As HTV West except:
12.15pm Westcountry News (9520007)
1.00 Emmerdale (60842)
1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (9168910)
2.15-2.45 Home and Away (653484)
3.20-3.25 Westcountry News (2154397)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (3551246)
6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (64007)
7.30-8.00 Stately Steeples (533)
10.30-10.40 Westcountry News (275736)
12.10-12.40am Public Morals (5141953)

As HTV West except:
12.15-12.30pm Meridian News (9520007)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away;
6.00 Meridian Tonight (397)
6.30-7.00 Getaways (649)
7.30-8.00 Wildlife SOS (533)
10.30-10.40 Meridian News (275736)
5.05-5.30am Freescreen (1901885)

As HTV West except:
12.20pm-12.30 Anglia News (6146755)
1.00-1.35 Upshot! (1490378)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street;
6.25-7.00 Anglia News (286133)
7.30-8.00 Golden Lotus (533)
10.30-10.40 Anglia News (275736)
12.10am Tales from the Darkside (5141953)

Starts: **5.55am Sesame Street** (r) (45190804) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (47233858) **9.00 The Cosby Show** (r) (T) (16721804) **9.30 FILM: The House on Telegraph Hill** (T) (61398007) **11.15 Roots to Success** (18283991) **11.30 Here's One I Made Earlier** (r) (T) (24019113) **12.00pm Caroline in the City** (T) (16741668) **12.30 Sesame Street** (38736842) **1.00 Planed Plant** (54670216) **1.00 Caffi Sali Mali** (54670216) **1.15 Wil Cwac Cwac** (54595571) **1.30 FILM: The African Queen** (T) (99193823) **3.30 Hampton Court Palace** (T) (56423649) **4.00 Fifteen-to-One Highlights** (r) (T) (56435484) **4.30 Ricki Lake** (T) (56431668) **5.00 Planed Plant** (45882718) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (56415620) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (69394910) **6.10 Heno** (T) (95003007) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (11565754) **7.30 Newyddion** (T) (56432397) **8.00 Penblwydd Hapus** (T) (98931282) **8.30 Pam Fi Duw?** (T) (11565709) **9.00 I dot** (78629282) **10.00 Glorious** (T) (24435620) **11.05 Bob and Margaret** (T) (84165115) **11.35 Whose Line Is It Anyway?** (T) (69071674) **12.05am Dispatches** (T) (94472224) **1.05 Trial and Error** (T) (71344717) **2.05 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

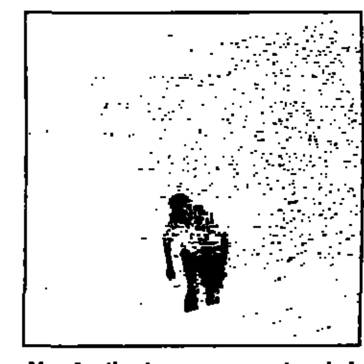
5.45am Animal Alphabet (7177991)
5.55 Sesame Street (r) (4025216)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (65397)
9.00 The Cosby Show (r) (T) (2867151)
9.35 The House on Telegraph Hill (1951) Adventure, with Richard Basehart. Directed by Robert Wise (T) (44346200)
11.15 Roots to Success (6655842)
11.30 Here's One I Made Earlier (r) (T) (5200)
12.00 Sesame Street (25674)
12.30pm Bewitched (T) (50858)
1.00 Pet Rescue (r) (T) (68484)
1.30 Untamed (1955) South African saga about an Irish immigrant who falls for a Boer commando while helping to found a white stronghold with Dutch settlers. Tyrone Power stars. Directed by Henry King (T) (53216)
3.30 Hampton Court Palace (T) (755)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One Highlights (r) (T) (262)
4.30 Countdown (T) (1889804)
4.55 Ricki Lake (T) (4990262)
5.30 Pet Rescue Roadshow Advice on caring for goats (T) (246)
6.00 Dishes New series. Dating show with a culinary theme, in which three hopeful contestants try to win a romantic evening in a top restaurant by demonstrating their cooking skills to prospective partners. Presented by Kate Thornton and Danny Brown (1/20) (T) (939)
6.30 Hollyoaks Ruth blows her top (T) (991)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (475736)
7.55 Cuban Faces Short film marking the 40th anniversary of the Marxist revolution in Cuba (4/5) (T) (361465)


Trevor Jenkins investigates the sinking of *HMS Glorious* (9pm)

8.00 Secret History An investigation into the sinking of *HMS Glorious* in 1940, a tragedy in which 1,500 seamen lost their lives in the Norwegian Sea (r) (T) (2007)
9.00 CHOICE **Dispatches** Specially extended report revealing the results of the largest-ever survey of male sufferers of domestic violence (T) (5571)
10.00 Rising Damp Comedy, starring Leonard Rossiter (r) (T) (26303)
10.30 Cold Turkey Fly-on-the-wall documentary exploring what really goes on at office Christmas parties (T) (257200)
11.05 Ally McBeal Rerun of the romantic comedy (r) (T) (951129)
12.00 4 Later; Oz (5911972)
1.05am Vidz Offbeat video reviews (3444311)
1.40 Late Toon: Tableau d'Amour Animation (r) (8354243)
1.45 For the Love of Faith Mormons discuss their faith. Last in series (9/9) (709953)
2.45 The Connivers Two pals hatch a money-making scheme (r) (7000717)
3.10 The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit (1956) Gregory Peck plays a New York executive struggling to choose between his family and career. Melodrama, with Fredric March. Directed by Nunnally Johnson (T) (34077427)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport (7068113)
7.00 WideWorld The impact of steam power on Victorian rural life (r) (T) (9236216)
7.30 Milkshake! (2851179)
7.35 Wimzie's House (r) (9967129)
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (1227620)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (1226991)
9.00 Animal House (2903303)
9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (r) (4932858)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (6686465)
10.20 Sunset Beach Maria attempts to regain her memory (T) (2284113)
11.10 Leeza (r) (2171939)
12.00 5 News at Noon (T) (1237007)
12.30pm Family Affairs Dave works his charm on Annie; (r) (T) 5 News Update (9003736)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Sheila is taken to hospital (T) (9235587)
1.30 The Roseanne Show (9002007)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (6423007)
2.30 Good Afternoon An hour of leisure, lifestyle and documentary (4615571)
3.30 92 Grosvenor Street (TVM 1985) Wartime adventure charting the escapades of British and American agents in Nazi-occupied Norway. Hal Holbrook and David McCallum star. Directed by Sheldon Larry (9799262)
5.20 Sunset Beach (r) (T) (6248991)
6.00 100 Per Cent (5457216)
6.30 Family Affairs Chris makes a stunning announcement (T) (5375668)
7.00 5 News (T) (6427823)
7.30 Champions of the Wild Profile of the conservationist Courtland Parfet, whose ranch in Kenya houses more than 100 black and white rhinos (T) (5364552)


Alan Austin stars as a man stranded in the Sahara Desert (8pm)

8.00 Survivor Real-life tales of endurance in the heat of an arid desert, involving groups of intrepid English adventurers; (r) (T) 5 News Update (5695620)
9.00 Ultimate Lie (TVM 1996) The adulterous father of a seemingly ordinary family is shocked to find his latest conquest is his long-lost daughter, who has turned to prostitution. Domestic drama, with Kristin Davis, Michael Murphy and Blair Brown. Directed by Larry Shaw (T) (52308804)
10.40 Sex and Shopping *The author Stella Duffy and the comedian Arabella Weir discuss the popularity of the lesbian porn market* (10/13) (3575823)
11.10 The Jack Docherty Show Chat and music (8129129)
11.50 Live and Dangerous Football action, featuring Ajax v Feyenoord in Holland (25881281)
4.40am Prisoner: Cell Block H Cass defends her hero against an accusation of rape, while Doreen and Helen join forces (3190088)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (6356363)

PAY TV: SATELLITE, CABLE AND DIGITAL

● **For further listings see Saturday's *Vision***

SKY 1

7.00am Count Duckula (98723) **7.30** Chris Evans Breakfast (64484) **8.30** Hollywood Squares (74910) **9.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (91397) **10.00** Oprah Winfrey (66804) **11.00** Guilty! (48228) **12.00pm** Jenny Jones (95945) **1.00** Mad About You (48284) **1.30** Jeopardy (29151) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (57804) **3.00** Jenny Jones (11465) **4.00** Guilty! (23200) **5.00** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (3649) **6.00** Married — With Children (7151) **6.30** Dream Team (1523) **7.00** The Simpsons (4378) **7.30** The Simpsons (3945) **8.00** America's Dumbest Criminals (3026) **8.30** World's Weirdest TV (2533) **9.00** Friends (29484) **9.30** ER (80113) **10.30** Veronica's Closet (68303) **11.00** Dream Team (98259) **11.30** Earth: Final Conflict (63736) **12.30am** Highlander (54156) **1.30** Long Play (5133088)

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film telephone 0990 800888
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 26) **Volcano (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60) **Excess Baggage (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59) **George of the Jungle (1997)** **Starship Troopers (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58) **Crash (1996)**

FILMFOUR

6.00pm Widow's Peak (1994) (7419007) **8.00 The Last Emperor (1987)** (4303910) **12.00am Go Fish (1994)** (9980446) **1.25 The Farm: Angola, USA (1995)** (3361601) **2.55 1984 (1984)** (2845798) **4.50 The Stranger Left No Card (1952)** (4000717) **6.00** Close

SKY PREMIER

6.00am Walk Like a Man (1987) (28281) **8.00 Green Card (1990)** (79028) **10.00 Frog and Wombat (1998)** (12888) **12.00pm** The Directors: The Films of Robert Wise (15755) **1.00** Femmes Fatales: Michelle Pfeiffer (97303) **2.00 Walk Like a Man (1987)** (515755) **3.45 Frog and Wombat (1998)** (857465) **5.30 Green Card (1990)** (70128) **7.30** Hollywood Buzz (3755) **8.00 First Do No Harm (1997)** (38620) **10.00 Malm (1997)** (48754) **12.00am Stealing Beauty (1996)** (33514) **2.00 Awakenings (1990)** (85175) **4.00 Desperate Trail (1994)** (81796)

SKY MOVIEMAX

5.25am UHF (1989) (9080799l) **7.00 The Hired Heart (1997)** (92465) **9.00 Torn Between Two Lovers (1979)** (51620) **11.00 Unwed Father (1997)** (35804) **1.00pm Challengers (1988)** (62736) **3.00 The Hired Heart (1997)** (67552) **5.00 Torn Between Two Lovers (1979)** (64587) **7.00 Unwed Father (1997)** (31649) **8.30** E! News Week in Review (4250) **9.00 Murder in Mind (1996)** (46649) **11.00 Executive Decision (1996)** (85319649) **1.10am Bachelor Party (1984)** (988578) **2.55 Keys to Tulsa (1997)** (678408) **4.50 Challengers (1988)** (57664934)

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm The Fighting Seabees (1944) (8149820) **6.00 I'll Be Seeing You (1941)** (7627533) **8.00 Spellbound (1945)** (7538378) **10.00 Brubaker (1980)** (64832610) **12.10am Alex and the Gypsy (1976)** (2444243) **1.50 Under the Volcano (1984)** (8070953) **3.45 The Lineup (1958)** (28084243)

TNT

9.00pm Marlowe (1969) (40278842) **11.00 Lady in the Lake (1946)** (21470088) **1.00am Sitting Target (1972)** (21421392) **3.00 Marlowe (1969)** (81489840) **5.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre **7.15** Wrestling **8.15** Sports Centre **8.30** Racing News **9.00** Aerobics Oz Style **9.30** You're On! **10.00** Figure Skating **12.00pm** Aerobics Oz Style **12.30** Basket- ball **2.30** Total Sport **3.00** Watersports World **4.00** World Pool League **5.00** Wrestl- ing **6.00** Sports Centre **6.30** Football League Review **7.00** What a Weekend **7.30** Futbol Mundial **8.00** Spanish Football **10.00** Sports Centre **10.15** You're On! **10.45** Trans World Sport **11.45** Sports Centre **12.00am** You're On! **12.30** League Review **1.00** Spanish Football **3.00** Trans World Sport **4.00** Sports Centre **4.15** Close

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am Aerobics Oz Style **7.30** Sports Centre **7.45** Racing News **8.15** Unbelievable Sports **8.45** Sports Centre **9.00** Fish TV **10.00** World Pool League **11.00** Golf Extra **2.00pm** Unbelievable Sports **2.30** Fastrax **3.00** Motor Racing: Race of Champions **4.00** Sports Unlimited **5.00** Inside the PGA Tour **5.30** League Review **6.00** What A Weekend **6.30** Rugby Club **7.30** Live Ice Hockey **10.00** US Golf: Skills Challenge **12.00am** Inside the PGA Tour **12.30** Live US Golf: Mercedes Championship **2.30** Ice Hockey **5.00** Sports Centre **5.15** Close

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00pm Wrestling **1.00** Fish TV **2.00** Sky Sports Classics Gold: Nigel Mansell Indy 500 **3.00** Football: The Entertainers **3.30** Figure Skating **5.30** Unbelievable Sports **6.00** Survival of the Fittest **6.30** Inside the PGA Tour **7.00** Fishing: Tight Lines **8.00** Motor Racing: Race of Champions **9.00** The Rugby Club **10.00** Bobby Charlton's Football Scrapbook **11.30** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Rally **8.00** Skiing **9.00** Cross-Country Skiing **11.00** Rally **11.30** Ski-Jumping **1.00pm** Live Snowboarding **2.00** Alpine Skiing **3.00** Live Tennis **5.00** Live Alpine Skiing **6.00** Tennis **7.30** Live Football **9.30** Rally **10.00** Alpine Skiing **11.00** Car on Ice **12.00am** Rally **12.30** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Crossroads **7.30** Neighbours **7.55** EastEnders **8.30** The Bill **9.00** The Bill **9.30** House of Eliott **10.30** Angels **11.00** Dallas **11.55** Neighbours **12.25pm** EastEnders **1.00** Juliet Bravo **2.00** Dallas **2.55** The Bill **3.25** The Bill **3.55** EastEnders **4.30** Angels **5.00** All Creatures Great and Small **6.00** Dynasty **7.00** May to December **7.40** It Ain't Half Hot, Mum **8.20** Yes, Minister **9.00** Fawlty Towers **9.40** Fawlty Towers **10.25** Ivanhoe **11.30** The Bill **12.00am** The Bill **12.30** Spender **1.25** FILM: The Ghoul (1933) **3.00** Shopping with Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am Within These Walls **7.00** On the Buses **7.30** The Fenn Street Gang **8.00** That's My Boy **8.30** Second Thoughts **9.00** Classic Coronation Street **9.30** Emmerdale Farm **10.00** thirtysomething **11.00** Hawaii Five-O **12.00pm** Classic Coronation Street **12.30** Emmerdale Farm **1.00** Nearest and Dearest **1.30** Watching **2.00** thirtysomething **3.00** The Love Boat **4.00** The Saint **5.00** Hawaii Five-O **6.00** Emmerdale Farm **6.30** Classic Coronation Street **7.00** Mission: Impossible **8.00** The Love Boat **9.00** Classic Coronation Street **9.30** The Brian Conley Show **10.00** Jokers Wild **10.30** Hogan's Heroes **11.00** Granada Men and Motors


James Spader stars in David Cronenberg's controversial film adaptation of J.G. Ballard's novel *Crash* (Sky Box Office 4)

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Bear in the Big Blue House **6.25** Classic Toons **6.35** Gummi Bears **7.00** Classic Toons **7.10** Aladdin **7.35** Timon and Pumbaa **8.00** 101 Dalmatians **8.25** Classic Toons **8.30** Hercules: The TV Show **9.00** Art Attack **9.20** Ned's Newt **9.30** Recess **9.45** Pepper Ann **10.00** Boy Meets World **10.30** Smart Guy **11.00** Teen Angel **11.30** Flash Forward **12.00pm** Doug **12.30** Dinosaurs **1.00** FILM: Valley of Adventure **2.20** Classic Toons **2.30** New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh **3.00** The Little Mermaid **3.30** Timon and Pumbaa **3.45** 101 Dalmatians **4.10** Hercules: The TV Show **4.40** Art Attack **5.00** Smart Guy **5.30** Recess **5.45** Pepper Ann **6.00** The Wonder Years **6.30** Boy Meets World **7.00** Honey I Shrunk the Kids: The TV Show **8.00** FILM: Danny, Champion of the World (1991) **9.30** Home Improvement **10.00** Dinosaurs **10.30** The Wonder Years **11.00** Dr Quinn Medicine Woman **12.00am** Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Power Rangers Turbo **6.30** Power Rangers Turbo [illegible]

NICKELODEON

7.00am Sabrina the Teenage Witch **1.30pm** Stunt Day back to back episodes **2.00** The Secret World of Alex Mack **2.30** Kenan and Kel **3.00** Clarissa Explains It All **3.30** Kablam! **4.00** Hey Arnold! **4.30** Rugrats **5.00** Sister Sister **5.30** Kenan and Kel **6.00** Sabrina the Teenage Witch **6.30** The Journey of Allen Strange **7.00** Close

TROUBLE

8.00am Saved by the Bell: The New Class **8.30** Hang Time **9.00** Tempestt **10.00** Hollyoaks **10.30** Echo Point **11.00** Sweet Valley High **11.30** California Dreams **12.00pm** The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air **12.30** In the House **1.00** Tempestt **2.00** Hollyoaks **2.30** Echo Point **3.00** Ready Or Not **3.30** City Guys **4.00** The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air **4.30** In the House **5.00** Saved by the Bell: The New Class **5.30** Sweet Valley High **6.00** Hang Time **6.30** Sugar's Real Life Stories **6.45** Bangs **7.00** USA High **11.00** Hang Time **11.30** Echo Point **12.00am** Close

BRAVO

8.00pm The A-Team **9.00** LAPD **9.30** Cops **10.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **10.30** Scary Sex **11.00** FILM: **Assault on Precinct 13 (1976)** **1.00am** Sex Bytes **1.30** Scary Sex **2.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **2.30** Cops **3.00** FILM: **Angel Heart (1987)** **5.15** LAPD **5.45** Short **6.00** Close

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Clueless **7.30** Desmond's **8.00** Roseanne **8.30** Just Shoot Me **9.00** Cybill **9.30** Seinfeld **10.00** Frasier **10.30** Cheers **11.00** Festival of Fun II **11.30** The Larry Sanders Show **12.00am** Late Night with David Letterman **1.00** Taxi **1.30** The Critic **2.00** Dr Katz **2.30** Soap **3.00** Wings **3.30** Nightstand **4.00** Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

SATELLITE: 5pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY

7.30am Bloomberg Information Television **8.00** Sightings **9.00** Buck Rogers in the 25th Century **10.00** Quantum Leap **11.00** Dark Shadows **11.30** The Ray Bradbury Theatre **12.00pm** Twilight Zone **1.00** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.00** Amazing Stories **2.30** Mysteries, Magic and Miracles **3.00** Buck Rogers in the 25th Century **4.00** The Incredible Hulk **5.00** Sightings **6.00** Time Trax **7.00** Quantum Leap **8.00** Mercy Point **9.00** Sci-Focus on Lexx **9.30** Sci-Focus on Star Trek: Insurrection **10.00** FILM: **Dead Fire (1997)** **12.00am** New Hitchcock **12.30** The Ray Bradbury Theatre **1.00** FILM: **The Corvini Inheritance** **2.00** Sci-Focus **2.30** New Hitchcock **3.00** Twilight Zone **3.30** Dark Shadows **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

6.00am Today's Gourmet **6.30** Graham Kerr **7.00** Craftwise **7.30** The Painted House **8.00** Wedding Story **8.30** A Baby Story **9.00** Simply Painting **9.25** The Home and Leisure House **9.30** Garden Rescue **10.00** Garden Doctors **10.30** Cookabout with Greg and Max **11.00** Two's Country, Get Stuck In **11.30** Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **12.00pm** Australia's Strangest Home Improvements **12.30** Doing It Up **1.00** Our House **1.30** Homeiime **2.00** Wood Wizard **2.30** Home Again with Bob Vila **3.00** This Old House with Steve and Norm

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **4.30** Walker's World **5.00** Connections 2 by James Burke **5.30** Turning Points **6.00** Animal Doctor **6.30** Hunters **7.30** Beyond 2000 **8.00** Discover Magazine **9.00** Clone Age **10.00** Super Structures **11.00** Forensic Detectives **12.00am** UFO, Down to Earth **1.00** Connections 2 by James Burke **1.30** Turning Points **2.00** Close

ANIMAL PLANET

12.00pm Horse Tales **12.30** Going Wild **1.00** Nature Watch With Julian Pettifer **1.30** Australia Wild **2.00** Wildlife ER **2.30** Human/Nature **3.30** Harry's Practice **4.00** Jack Hanna's Zoo Life **4.30** Animal Doctor **5.00** Pet Rescue **5.30** Australia Wild **6.00** The New Adventures of Black Beauty **6.30** Lassie **7.00** Rediscovery of the World: Channel Islands **8.00** Animal Doctor **8.30** Zoo Babies **9.30** Emergency Vets **10.00** Deadly Australians **10.30** The Big Animal Show **11.30** Emergency Vets **12.00am** Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm New Fox in Town **7.30** Herculaneum: Voices of the Past **8.00** Beauty and the Beast **9.00** Extreme Earth: Land of Fire and Ice **9.30** Extreme Earth: Earthquake **10.00** On the Edge: Deep Diving with the Russians **11.00** Icebound: Antarctic Adventure **12.00am** Icebound: Poles Apart

HISTORY

4.00pm The World at War: Alone **5.00** Four Years of Thunder: Flying to War **6.00** Mummies: Tutankhamun **7.00** Biography: Admiral Lord Nelson

CARLTON FOOD [CABLE]

9.00am Food Network Daily **9.30** Food for Thought **10.00** Who's Cooking Dinner? **10.30** Worrall Thompson Cooks **11.00** What's Cooking? **11.30** Coxon's Kitchen College **12.00pm** Food Network Daily **12.30** For Better, For Worse **1.00** Food for Thought **1.30** The Green Gourmet **2.00** Tessa Bramley's Country Kitchen **2.30** Food Network Daily **3.00** Retrospectives **3.30** Coxon's Kitchen College **4.00** From the Ground Up **4.30** Caribbean Light **5.00** Close

LIVING

6.00am Tiny and Crew **6.20** Philbert the Frog **6.30** Johnson and Friends **6.45** Tiny Tales **6.50** Polka Dot Shorts **7.00** Practical Parenting **7.05** Professor Bubble **7.30** Caillou **7.35** Bug Alert **7.55** Practical Parenting **8.00** Barney and Friends **8.30** Tiny Tales **8.35** Tiny and Crew **8.50** Practical Parenting **9.00** Diet Show **9.30** The Roseanne Show **10.00** The Jerry Springer Show **10.50** Maury Povich **11.40** Brookside **12.10pm** Animal Rescue **12.40** Rescue 911 **1.10** Special Babies **1.40** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction **2.10** LA Law **3.10** The Jerry Springer Show **4.00** Michael Cole **4.50** Rolanda **5.40** Ready, Steady, Cook **6.15** The Jerry Springer Show **7.00** Rescue 911 **7.35** Animal Rescue **8.00** Murder Call **9.00** FILM: **Call Me Anna (1990)** **11.00** Sex Life Down Under **12.00am** Close

ZEE TV

5.00am Char Raasta **5.30** Music Time **6.00** Hero Kal Aaj Au **6.30** Awaaz Nayee An **7.00** Faith **7.30** News **8.00** Karoban Duniya **8.30** Saltaab **9.00** Zanjeeren **9.30** Zee Health Show **10.00** Hawaain **11.00** Pot Luck **11.30** Parampara **12.00pm** FILM: **Sannapathi** **3.00** Zee Bangla **3.30** Public Demand **4.00** Campus **4.30** Fairdeal Antakshari **5.30** Daraar **6.00** Top of the Pops **6.30** Hip Hip Hurray **7.00** Gudgudee **7.30** Cinemagic **8.00** News **8.30** Chahat Aur Nafrat **9.00** Himalaya's Hasralein **10.00** Amma Aba Ali **10.30** Anhonee **12.00am** News **12.30** Zee Business Show **1.00** Zee Bangla **1.30** Rashat **2.00** FILM: **Hindi Movie: Kasam Chande Ki** **4.30** An Hour With



SARAH POTTER 47

Derby County adopt family way of keeping in trim

SPORT

RUGBY UNION 48

Sedgley Park plan to bring Wasps down to earth



THURSDAY JANUARY 7 1999

Formula One newcomers prepare to fight ban on alternative car liveries

FIA facing collision course

THE newest team in Formula One motor racing will take on the sport's rulers today in an unprecedented confrontation, even before it has turned a wheel in its first season.

British American Racing (BAR) is probably the richest team to set up in Formula One in the modern era and is flexing its muscles by threatening to overturn the established conventions. Backed with an estimated £100 million from British American Tobacco (BAT), the team yesterday unveiled its cars and drivers, but the hype of the launch was overshadowed when the veils were drawn back.

On one side Jacques Villeneuve was in red and white overalls with his dramatically styled white car with red stripes, to reflect its Lucky Strike cigarette branding; on the other was Ricardo Zonta, the young Brazilian, in the blue and yellow of BAT's 555 brand.

Craig Pollock, the BAR managing director, wants the cars to line up like that all season, contrary to the rules and traditions of a sport in which teams have always run two cars in the same livery. Within hours of the launch, lawyers will be sitting down in Paris today to hear his case, that he has the right to determine the colours and branding of his team's cars and not the governing body, the FIA.

The action, trying to defeat Formula One's rule-makers even before the team is officially part of what is probably the most lucrative but strictly controlled of sports, is audacious, though the consequences could be far-reaching.

Money, inevitably, is at the root of the row, with BAT clearly wanting to see a handsome payback for its massive investment, in terms of huge television exposure for two of its most important brands. It seems likely, though, that Pollock will be stonewalled, with Formula One's rulers — not unused to encouraging the odd pound or two into the sport — unwilling to let commercialism run rampant.

If BAR wins, then there is nothing to stop other cigarette-sponsored teams turning out in different liveries, presenting a multicoloured grid of mobile advertising hoardings instead of traditional team colours that are easily identified.

Pollock was in a belligerent mood, pointing out that the issue was "critical" to the funding of the new team. Commercial branding on the cars was almost the only area of control left to the teams, he said, which was why he was prepared to push the FIA into arbitration.

"The reason we have gone to arbitration is to protect our commercial rights," he said. "What we have on our cars is the only way we have to finance our team, so we want the right to decide that."

Just as clearly, his multinational backers are not going to roll over in the face of FIA opposition and looming European Union bans on tobacco advertising and sponsorship.

Martin Broughton, the BAT chairman, gave warning that people who thought the cigarette industry had no future were wrong, and said that sponsorship of the new team was proof of that. Instead, he asserted that millions of people "enjoyed a good smoke, while knowing the risks that go with it", and looked forward with "creeping and surging excitement" to showing off the colourful Lucky Strike and 555 liveries via television in 180 markets around the world. "We are proud of what we do and that pride will be enhanced in 1999," he said.

The commitment is certainly impressive, with BAR in operation within a year, underwritten by the cigarette company's huge sponsorship. Apart from a futuristic new factory, built from scratch at Brackley in Northamptonshire, the team has Villeneuve, the 1997 world champion, and Zonta, the GT champion with Mercedes this year.

Villeneuve said that he was not only attracted by a £10 million salary and a share in the business, but because he sees more immediate potential with the newcomers than with a Williams team that failed to register a victory last season for the first time in a decade.

Pollock, Villeneuve's former manager, said that the diminutive Canadian had the same "twinkle in his eye" as when he first joined Formula One from American IndyCars in 1996, and Villeneuve was brimful of confidence, particularly after a first test session in which he was fourth quickest.

"It is exciting," Villeneuve said. "It is a new team starting from scratch and the car has shown already that it is very fast. We have to set high goals. If you go into Formula One with the right budget, the right people and the right frame of mind, then you can do well.

"Teams which go into Formula One only expecting to finish in the first ten probably never do better than that. If I didn't believe we were competitive then I wouldn't have come to BAR."

The portents are good. The car has been constructed under the direction of Adrian Reynard, whose company has scored a debut victory in every series it has entered and was one of the most successful constructors in IndyCars. BAT's vast resources meant that the team could recruit some of the best talent, including Jock Clear, Villeneuve's race engineer, from Williams.

However, the stumbling block of what colours Villeneuve and BAR will race under remains. A decision might not be announced today, though it is beyond doubt that a settlement will have to be reached before the first race, in Melbourne on March 7.

Even Villeneuve, resplendent in his new overalls, was not sure what colour his car would be this season. With Pollock and Broughton at his side, and hordes of press notebooks poised, he declared: "It is nothing to do with me."

Villeneuve, left, and Zonta display the controversial new colours of the BAR team when it was launched at its Northamptonshire headquarters yesterday. Photograph: Marc Aspland

Basketball dispute resolved after six months

By Our Sports Staff

THE unthinkable was averted yesterday when the National Basketball Association (NBA) players and team owners reached a deal to end their 191-day dispute and begin a season of about 50 games during the first week of next month. NBA officials confirmed the agreement, after all-night negotiations, just seven hours before the union was scheduled to vote on the final ownership offer.

"I don't think anyone won. Both sides lost on it," Fred Hoiberg, of Indiana Pacers, said. "It will take some time to get the game back where it was. Hopefully we can get back to work soon and put a good product on the court."

David Stern, the NBA commissioner, and Billy Hunter, a union executive director, worked out a deal that saved the sport from a humiliating shutdown, but three months of the season have already elapsed. A total of 437 games have been lost and the number will reach 659 if another month is needed to start the season. Had a compromise not been reached, the sport would have been facing the first full-season shutdown in its history.

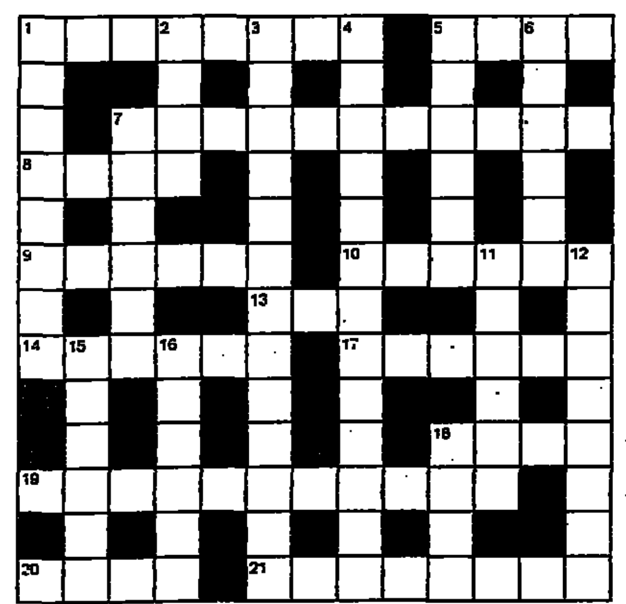
The agreement ends a bitter battle that began on July 1 when owners locked out players, claiming they were being driven into bankruptcy by huge salaries that last season took 57 per cent of the league's team-related income. NBA players have the highest average salaries in North American sport at $2.6 million (about £1.5 million).

"I wouldn't blame the fans if they never came back," Jeff Hornacek, of Utah, said. "Neither side is coming out of this thing looking good."

Indiana Pacers are favourites to win the NBA finals, which are likely to be staged in July. They have the core of their squad from last season, when they were eliminated by the Chicago Bulls, the eventual winners, in the semi-finals.

Their players have conducted workouts together in Indianapolis. In contrast, the Bulls are not certain to have Michael Jordan, who is considering retirement, Scottie Pippen and Dennis Rodman — three of their leading players last season — back among their ranks.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1608

ACROSS
1 One comes *before swallow dares (Shak.)* (8)
5 Oberon's assistant *(MND)* (4)
7 Very steep (descent) (11)
8 Depend (on) (4)
9 Think about (6)
10 Beginning (6)
13 Drink tiny mouthful (3)
14 Indelible skin design (6)
17 Business magnate (6)
18 An astringent: looks like *a Scots chimney* (4)
19 Insubordinate (11)
20 Sudden shake, shock (4)
21 Devil worshipper (8)

DOWN
1 Old; broken down (8)
2 Rage, power (4)
3 GP's insistence (7.6)
4 Butterfly enthusiast (13)
5 Strongly effective (6)
6 Period of study; direction of travel (6)
7 One orbiting star (6)
11 Ruined (6)
12 Block of flats; rooms in this (8)
15 One lacking normal pigment (6)
16 Gullet (6)
18 In a while (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1607
ACROSS: 1 Slant 7 Tyranny 8 Audible 9 Psychic 11 Feeble 13 Truculent 15 Fanatical 19 Lolita 21 Garbled 23 Ecuador 24 Passive 25 Tarry
DOWN: 1 Scarf 2 Addled 3 Tybalt 4 Step 5 Cancel 6 Ancient 10 Social 12 Ermine 14 Ramadan 16 Ambush 17 Locust 18 Girder 20 Array 22 Deep

Premiership considers referees becoming wired for sound

By Russell Kempson

REFEREES and their assistants in the FA Carling Premiership are likely to be wired for sound next season. In an effort to increase communication between the three match officials and help the decision-making of the referee, they will wear earpieces and microphones.

The FA Premier League, which runs the Premiership, will first experiment during matches in its youth academy leagues towards the end of this season. If that proves to be successful, the high-tech equipment will be introduced into the Premiership in time for the 1999-2000 campaign. It has already been given the blessing of Fifa, the sport's world governing body.

"We've still got to do all the costings, but I would think it's 95 per cent certain of going ahead," Philip Don, the Premier League referees' officer, said yesterday. "I believe it will assist the control of the match officials and, if technology can be developed to assist the referee, not replace him, then we've got to investigate it."

Initially, only the assistants will wear microphones. "The referee will have just an earpiece," Don said. "You can control what the referee says, but not the players. It could be embarrassing for them if the referee had a mike and it could also mean that the linesmen were deafened every time he blows his whistle."

Rugby union has used a "talking flag" system for three years, by which the touch judges can talk to the referee through a microphone and transmitter in the pole of their flags. They press a button on the hand grip when they want to be heard.

"It looks a bit like they're eating an ice-cream cone," Nick Bunting, the national referee development officer of the Rugby Football Union (RFU), said. "The referees pick up what is said via a receiver under their shirts or attached to their shorts and then through the earpiece.

"It has gone exceptionally well and is an excellent way of providing feedback to the referee of what is going on behind his back. It has really helped in cleaning up the minor infringements."

The radio sets, for which the RFU has its own frequency, cost £1,500 and are used by all officials in the Allied Dunbar Premiership first division. "We've had instances of officials picking up wavelengths from illegal radio operators and security firms, but, other than that, we've had no problems," Bunting said.

Rugby referees use microphones only when their games are televised live. "They wear another transmitter pack to the studio and the viewers can hear their decisions straightaway," Bunting said. "The explanation is very clear and it's a brilliant way of educating the spectator." Football's assistant referees already have buttons on their flags, which they use to attract the referee's attention via his receiver.

Mike Reed, one of the Premiership's leading referees, welcomed the new move. "If it will help communication, I'm all for it," he said. "Anything that aids control has got to be good. I'd prefer it to be two-way, though. I'd like to be able to talk to my assistants."

Listening in: Brian Campsall has been one of rugby's pioneers



